DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 252 641 UD 024 030

AUTHOR	Seeley, David
TITLE	Home-School-Community Partnership as an Educational Reform Strategy.
SPONS AGENCY	Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, Mich.
PUB DATE	Apr 83
NOTE	101p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Change Strategies; Cooperative Planning; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Family School Relationship; Government Role; Literature Reviews; Participative Decision Making; Private Agencies; *School Community Relationship; School Districts; Social Networks
IDENTIFIERS	Conceptual Frameworks; *Educational Partnerships

ABSTRACT

Educational partnership situations where home, school, and community collaborate to produce educational achievement, with shared initiative and responsibilities, are the subject of this report. The origins and evolution of educational partnerships and their relation to other types of participation are outlined. Partnership is then discussed as an action strategy--how it permits broad participation, bridges divergent interests, taps current interest in academic achievement, responds to fiscal constraints, and links with new interest in family and community. Next, partnership is viewed as a conceptual framework--for explaining past failures, providing a map for action, dealing with the ideological challenge to public education, and developing new policies. After this discussion, partnership's relation to the following reform strategies is detailed: school-based planning, outcome-based learning, school effectiveness, community education and community schools, decentralization, and participation in collective bargaining. Then partnership in action is considered with descriptions of its role in early childhood education, its relation to the changing rhetoric of educational reform, local school system partnership actions, rural programs, State support for partnership, Federal action, and support for partnership action by intermediary organizations and networks and coalitions. A comprehensive view of related research is provided next. In conclusion, possible partnership interventions are outlined, national partnership networks and intervention in the form of research and policy analysis being considered in the most detail. (RDN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED252641

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AS AN EDUCATIONAL REFORM STRATEGY

by

David Seeley

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
J. Samuelson
C.S. MOTT FOUNDATION
FLINT, MICHIGAN
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
[ ] Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

UD 024 030

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
AS AN EDUCATIONAL REFORM STRATEGY*

by David Seeley

Contents

	Page
I. What Is Educational Partnership?	1
A. A Short Definition	1
B. An Old Idea	1
C. A new Trend	3
D. Relation to Other Types of Participation	4
II. Partnership As An Action Strategy	6
A. Partnership Is A Simple Concept	6
B. Partnership Permits Broad Participation	6
C. Partnership Bridges Divergent Interests	9
D. Partnership Taps Current Interest in Academic Achievement	10
E. Partnership Responds to Fiscal Constraints	11
F. Partnership Links With New Interest in Family and Community	12
III. Partnership As A Conceptual Framework	13
A. Explaining Past Failures	13
B. Providing a Map for Action	15
C. Partnership and the Ideological Challenge to Public Education	16
D. Historic Turning Point for Education	18
IV. How Partnership Relates to Other Reform Strategies	19
A. School-based Planning	19
B. Outcome-based Learning	20
C. School Effectiveness	21
D. Community Education and Community Schools	22
E. Decentralization	23
F. Participation in Collective Bargaining	24
V. Partnership in Action	
A. Early Childhood	26
B. The Changing Rhetoric of Educational Reform	29
C. Local School System Action	30
D. Rural Programs	40
E. State Support of Partnership	41
F. Federal Action	46
G. Support of Intermediary Organizations	49
H. Networks and Coalitions	56
VI. Research	66
A. Reviews of Research	66
B. Surveys of Opinions and Attitudes	69
C. Program Evaluations	77
D. Families As Educators	79
E. Other Research	84

*Prepared for and financed by Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan - 1983

VII. Interventions

A. Summary of Present Status of Partnership as a Reform Strategy 87
B. Intervention at Various Levels 88
C. National Partnership Network 88
D. State and Local Coalitions 90
E. Intermediary and Support Organizations 91
F. Materials, Guildelines, Video-tapes, etc. 91
G. The Media 91
H. Leadership Activities 92
I. Advocacy 93
J. Action Programs 93
K. Orientation and Planning Grants 94
L. Research and Policy Analysis 95

VIII. Conclusion 97

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AS AN EDUCATIONAL REFORM STRATEGY

I. What Is Educational Partnership?

A. A Short Definition.

"Home-school-community partnership" can mean anything from the collaboration of high level education and business leaders to a mother helping her child with his homework - and from the most vaporous rhetoric to the most profound change in public education since its founding in the last century.

For the purposes of this analysis partnership refers to situations where home, school, and community collaborate to produce educational achievement, with shared initiative and responsibilities, as opposed to situations where the primary relationships are derived from the "delivery of educational services" by professional staff to students, parents, and community. This definition still covers a broad range of activities, and it does not draw an absolutely clear line between partnership and many school practices that have some partnership aspects. It does, however, emphasize collaboration as opposed to professional "service delivery," which is the dominant mode of education in most public schools.

Examples of educational partnership activities are peer tutoring, school volunteer programs, parent workshops to help parents help their own children, a more effective homework policy, training teachers to work more productively with parents, community health screening programs to detect and remedy sight, hearing and other health problems, parent hot-lines, homework hot-lines, community-based homework helper centers, local merchants' assistance in school attendance and achievement, "class parents" to help communicate with other parents, etc.

B. An Old Idea

In earlier days, most education was conducted on a partnership basis. School played much less of a role, and children learned to become functioning members of society primarily through family and

community. Even those elements of education that later became the special province of the schools--the 3 R's, literature, history, etc. --were often taught in the home or through interaction with relatives or other members of the community.

The move away from educational partnership came with the establishment of schools as separate bureaucratic institutions. The early schools in small town America were still close to the partnership model. A few "school marms" hired and supervised by a local school committee, and often living with local families, could serve "in loco parentis" to bring up the community's children and introduce them to the elements of learning. The frequent informal contact between parent, teacher and citizen ensured conformity between home, school and community.

As America became urban and industrial, an important transformation took place. Schools became school "systems," and education became "governmental"--something which parents and communities delegated to government. As the schools became increasingly professionalized and bureaucratized, they began to see their function not merely as helping the families carry out their responsibilities, but as an independent professional mission, managed by a hierachical system, led by a new profession of educational administrators, and guided by curriculum experts and professors in often quite distant teacher colleges.

The accomplishments of this system of universal free public education in sheer size and numbers have been phenomenal. Tens of thousands of tiny community enterprises were consolidated into substantial governmental units, headed by superintendents, aided by assistant superintendents for curriculum, personnel, business, etc., and a hierarchy of non-teaching staff. Thousands of school buildings were built, of ever increasing size, equipment and complexity. Hundreds of teacher training colleges were established to train the army of teachers needed to man the system, and their training was increasingly "professional," requiring ever higher degrees and specialized courses. Expenditures for public education were multiplied many times over, until it is today one of the largest and most pervasive enterprises in American society.

C. A New Trend

By the 1950's, however, a serious question began to be asked: Were the students learning enough? First it was critics like Rudolph Flesch, Arthur Bestor, and Admiral Rickover who asked it. After Sputnik streaked across the skies it became a serious concern at all levels of government, with special emphasis on our shortcomings in math, science, and foreign language. By the 1960's emphasis shifted to the shortcomings at even a more basic level--the thousands of young people who were not gaining the most rudimentary education in the 3 R's, and who were therefore prime candidates for poverty, delinquency, and unemployment.

A wide range of reforms were devised to deal with these concerns--new curricula, teacher workshops, remedial programs, federal aid and special services of all kinds--and many hoped that the new funds and programs would right whatever was wrong. By the 1970's, however, serious disillusionment set in. The reforms did not seem to be working. Thousands of young people continued to reach adulthood woefully uneducated and unable to fulfil their responsibilities as workers and citizens. The SAT scores began their worrisome decline. Violence and "discipline" remained a major concern, and teachers complained more than ever of "burnout."

Thoughtful educators began to realize that something more fundamental was wrong. Some were so frustrated that they turned to radical solutions, such as home instruction, educational vouchers, or the abolition of schools altogether. Others began to look into the history and structure of the public school system to see what went wrong and how the system might be reoriented to make schools more productive and effective. While no single answer emerged, increasing attention began to focus on the fact that centralization, bureaucratization, and professionalization of education, in addition to the benefits they brought, also tended to alienate parents and communities from their schools. Reforms designed to reinvolve parents and citizens began to receive attention. These efforts provided no instant solutions, and many were subverted and co-opted by the professional educational bureaucracies and political opportunists. By the end of the 1970's, however, two factors focused

more attention on this line of thought: (1) the increased demand for learning outcomes, and (2) the reduction in funds available for traditional reform strategies. It became evident that there would not be sufficient funds available for the ever-increasing services and new programs which were the normal response of schools to demands for improvement. It was also becoming more evident that the resource represented by parent, student and community motivation was severely underutilized. The idea of a collaborative approach to education, which would join together the energies and commitment of students, parents, teachers and communities began to come into its own. At the same time it was clear that something more was needed than the typical kind of parent and citizen involvement that had developed in public school systems--something that would involve more real collaboration and partnership.

D. Relation To Other Types of Participation

1. PTA's and parent groups. Parent and community involvement in education, of course, is not new--not even in the most bureaucratic and professionally alienating school systems. But involvement is not necessarily partnership. There have been mothers' clubs and PTA's since the earliest days of public school systems, but these parent activities can coexist with professional service delivery without necessarily changing the basic service delivery relationships between professional staff, parents and children. They often involve only a small portion of the parents and teachers; most of the teachers continue to go about their professional work without regard to the PTA, and most parents receive their services passively, without involving themselves in parents' groups. Those who are active often provide useful support to school activities, or become involved in school policy, but this need not involve parents in collaborative relationships with teachers in producing learning.

In recent years some parent groups have shifted to an advocacy role, or become overtly political or militant. Necessary as this may be in some cases, it is clearly not the same thing as a collaborative relationship; it is usually, in fact, a symptom of the lack of effective collaboration.

2. Advisory committees. Advisory groups of various kinds are another way in which parents and citizens have been involved in public schools. They have been a standard technique of school administrators for obtaining community advice and support, but, again, they do not necessarily involve collaboration in the production of learning. The advice might only relate to the manner in which the professional staff delivers its services (e.g. Should the school offer foreign languages, vocational training, sex education, or after school programs? Should the school schedule be changed? Etc.). Advisory committees proliferated greatly during the 1960's under federal mandates, and in at least some of them, such as Head Start, the parent involvement developed into genuine partnerships. But in many, the parents met and gave advice, with little changing in the relationships between teachers, parents, students and community.

3. Political participation. Parents and citizens, of course, have official responsibility (in most districts) for electing school board members and voting for school budgets, and this can be a powerful involvement, especially when issues are clear and candidates campaign for specific policy alternatives (e.g. for or against sex education, or a budget increase), but many school board and budget elections are routine, and few voters participate. And even when participation is hot and heavy, the participation is political, not eductional. The voter, as voter, is not collaborating with school staff in the production of learning. If anything, such participation tends to reinforce not partnership, but the political, bureaucratic accountability system that has institutionalized the professional service delivery approach.

While parents and citizens, therefore, have participated in various supportive, advisory, and political roles, these do not necessarily involve partnership with the schools. When, in the 1970's, attention began to focus on the need to engage the vast untapped resources of family and community in helping to improve educational achievement, it became clear that a new approach would be needed--an approach which would give parents,

students, and citizens more initiative and responsibility and recapture some of the intimacy, humanity, and commitment of pre-bureaucratic education, while preserving the practical and political advantages of a public school system. Some people think this is impossible, but it is what education through partnership is all about. Since it has not yet been seriously tried, the arguments as to its impossibility are purely theoretical. Meanwhile, there are many reasons to believe it has a better chance of success than other reform strategies.

II. Partnership As An Action Strategy

A. Partnership Is A Simple Concept

As a strategy for educational reform, the concept of educational partnerships can be reduced to utterly simple terms: If parents, teachers, students and community work together, educational achievement can be substantially increased. Conversely, if they don't work together, educational achievement will languish.

"Simple," however, does not mean "easy." There are serious obstacles to educational partnership, the main one being that an alternative "professional service delivery" model of education has become institutionalized over many decades and is deeply embedded in the policies and practices of school systems and in the habits and attitudes of teachers, administrators, parents, students and citizens. Nevertheless, a partnership approach can be implemented, once people understand its potential for resolving present educational stalemates and improving educational achievement. It is simple to grasp and in many ways simple to implement. One need not understand all the theory behind it to see its common sense and join in.

B. Partnership Permits Broad Participation

Partnership provides a way of involving almost everyone--students, parents, teachers, administrators, citizens, businesses, and local organizations of all kinds. They all can play roles in helping to improve educational achievement.

One of the problems with the parent participation movement as it has developed in recent years is that its primary emphasis is on political involvement, i.e. involvement in "decision-making." The demands for involvement in decision-making are understandable when parents see that decisions made are against the interests of their children, whether they be faulty curriculum, unfair suspensions, hiring or retention of incompetent staff, or wasteful use of funds. Nevertheless, legitimate as these demands may be, they have serious problems as a reform strategy. The most obvious problem is that they threaten the position of the professional staff, and since full-time professional staff have formidable powers for defending their position compared to parents and citizens, the demands are usually frustated. Not only does the professional staff have their own full-time talent and professional and organizational resources at their disposal, but they have the heavy weight of legitimacy on their side: the demands of parents or citizens for decision-making power violate the official system of public school governance. The parents and citizens can always be told (and usually are) that they already have a voice in educational policy through their representatives on the school board, and the school board can only be held accountable through the chain of command running from superintendent down through the principals to the teachers. Any other participation in decision-making is viewed as interfering with this official, "democratic" system. The fact that the system is often a sham and doesn't work to represent the interests of parents and citizens, does not mean it does not hold a powerful position that is hard to dislodge. It only means that the failure to dislodge it brings greater frustration, since people are told that it is not just the power of a self-interested professional bureaucracy, but the democratic system itself, which stands in the way of changing schools that are not serving their children.

The result is that it takes widespread political mobilization of parent and citizen forces to overcome the natural powers of resistance of school bureaucracies. Such political mobilization can sometimes be accomplished with emotional issues such as sex education or book censorship (with both good and bad results), but it is difficult when dealing

with the routine mismanagement of education and the poor educational achievement of thousands of students. The sad fact is that for these crucially important aspects of education, it is hard to get many people politically involved. The reformers, regardless of the merits of their complaints or reforms, usually represent too small a political force to overcome the built-in resistance of well-entrenched school bureaucracies.

The effort to involve parents and citizens in educational partnerships is a different matter. While all too few parents and citizens are currently involved as partners in improving educational achievement, it is mostly because they are seldom asked. Our present "service delivery" mentality signals to them that all they need do is turn their children over to the schools and they will be turned back educated, civilized and ready to fulfil their adult roles in society. Happily, many parents know instinctively that this is not so, and they stay involved with their children's education to ensure success. Many more parents could play this role, as "the first educator of the child," if it were made clear that they must do so, and if they were given support where needed, both by the schools and the rest of the community.

So far as other resources in the community are concerned, the same thing applies: By and large school systems have not asked for help. On the contrary, they have seen it in their interest to take on more and more functions themselves, in the name of helping children, but also quite consistently with classic bureaucratic empire building. Now that resources are drying up for ever more expansive school services, school systems are turning more to their communities for help in dealing with the social, health, and emotional needs of their students, and, while it takes some getting used to, they are finding that many community resources are willing to help once the initial mistrust and past resentments are overcome.

The prospect is, therefore, that if the idea of educational partnership is taken seriously, large numbers of parents, students, citizens and local institutions can be enlisted in the effort to improve educational achievement. Most people know it is the right thing to do, and with the

proper encouragement and support, they will do it.

It may be said that this sort of participation is no substitute for participation in decision-making, and this is true. It is not a substitute, but it may well be a pre-requisite for effective political participation. So long as few parents are involved in the education of their children, few will become involved in political action to improve education. And those few who do will too often have other agendas which help to undermine the legitimacy of the reform efforts. The same thing applies to citizens: those who are involved in working with the schools to improve education will be much better informed as to what needs to be done and how to do it--and there will be many more of them if they have first been mobilized as helpers rather than as political activists. Partnership as an educational reform strategy is not intended as a substitute for political action. It is proposed as an avenue of action which has good prospects of success in improving educational achievement where political action by itself has all too often failed.

C. Partnership Bridges Divergent Interests

One of the reasons why it is easier to expand the number of people involved in educational partnerships than the number involved in political action, is that while political action is a threat to professional staff, educational partnerships are in their interest. They don't always see this immediately, and sometimes their first reaction is negative. Many have such a strong orientation to the professional "service delivery" approach that they see their job as delivering services to students, parents and the community, rather than working with them to produce learning. The shift from service delivery to partnership is sometimes difficult, but as they grasp the idea, they can see it as a way to help them get their jobs done. This is a particularly powerful motivation when the public is increasing its demands for educational output while withholding resources for more professional inputs. Teachers and administrators have the choice either of complaining about the unfairness of the situation while watching their ship sink, or of joining with parents and communities to do a better job. When they do the latter, they are more likely to find the public willing to come forth with needed resources.

Partnership is a way of bridging divergent interests. As public education has come into its time of troubles, everyone has turned on one another to place the blame: parents blame teachers for selfishness and incompetence; teachers blame parents for laziness and apathy; administrators blame teachers for lack of professional commitments; and teachers blame administrators for poor supervision and lack of support. The whole system is grinding to a halt over mutual blame-placing. It is a stalemate situation, with all parties satisfied they have found someone else to blame, yet all monumentally dissatisfied because the system isn't working. Partnership offers a way out of this. It says, "let's stop blaming each other, and work together to get the job done." This does not mean there are not good reasons to find fault with almost everyone involved. It means that finding fault doesn't educate kids, and in fact stands in the way of constructive action.

D. Partnership Taps Current Interest in Academic Achievement

Partnership fits well with the current demands for increased educational achievement. While the public is not yet aroused to engage in educational partnerships, it is aroused about poor educational achievement--whether the problem is the illiteracy of new employees, the dropping SAT scores, or the superior achievements of the Japanese. This provides a powerful motivation for educational reform which twenty years ago would have been channeled into new programs and "innovations" to improve educational achievement. Today there is much more skepticism about such an approach. Yet people are eager to find a new approach, and education through partnership provides one. It can be implemented in every school and school district, and doesn't require a radical disestablishment of public education. True, it represents a fundamental shift from the service delivery approach which has grown dominant over the last hundred years, and it will take time and effort to implement, but work can begin on it immediately, building momentum as it develops.

It is fortuitous that the primary public concern at the moment is educational achievement, since this provides a goal around which unity and partnership can be developed. Issues like sex education or prayer

in the schools present a much harder problem, since they tend to divide people rather than unite them. But educational achievement is something nearly everyone can feel good about. The differences of opinion about which aspects of achievement are most important (e.g. academic vs. vocational, intellectual vs. social and psychological) can be mitigated by getting broad consensus that the whole range of educational achievement must be lifted--from basic competencies to higher level math and science, and from better behavior to better preparation for employment. There is so much work to be done to improve educational achievement that there is room for collaboration of all kinds. Getting people busy with it is one way to reduce the interminable debates and discussions that paralyze action.

An example of this kind of unity-building occurred in New York when the State Board of Regents first enforced its competency requirements for graduation from high school. While many people disagreed about the value of the tests and whether the students or the schools should be blamed for the failures, many different groups were willing to join together in a "Campaign for Competency" to help any student who wanted to pass the tests. Over 400 volunteer tutors were recruited by the Campaign and trained on a crash basis by the School Volunteer Program and local colleges, and 90% of the students tutored passed the test. The NAACP, which was busy suing in Florida to prevent competency tests, joined in the Campaign in New York to make sure students passed them.

E. Partnership Responds to Fiscal Constraints

A recent New York Times poll showed that most people would be willing to raise their taxes to improve the schools. (April 11, 1983, p. A 18). The problem is that the public is not convinced that all increased school taxes actually result in improving the schools. With a five fold increase in educational expenditures between 1940 and 1980 (even discounting for inflation), and yet so much continued dissatisfaction, there is little wonder why taxpayers have become resistant. Realistically, therefore, reform strategies that require substantial increases in funds are not likely to be successful at this time. The public must first be reconvinced that their expenditures will pay off.

What is needed is reform strategies that can help to improve learning and restore confidence in education. Partnership fills this requirement. It happily does not cost much money. It does cost some, because change in people's attitudes and behavior always requires process, process requires time and effort, and at least some of the time and effort usually has to be paid for. Nevertheless, a minimal amount of money for teacher and parent workshops, coordination and materials can pay rich dividends in enlisting the untapped resources in the student body and among parents and citizens. And it need not all be new money. If even a small portion of the funds now spent on services which produce little increased learning were spent instead on enlisting the help of students, parents, and community, the cost-benefit ratio would increase sharply.

F. Partnership Links with New Interest in Family and Community

There is another reason why a partnership approach to educational reform has a good chance of success in the present climate: After many years of neglect, the family is once again being recognized as a crucial and valuable institution. The nature of the family may be changing, with more single parent homes, working parents, and fewer children, but as Mary Jo Bane says, the family is "here to stay." It will have a powerful effect on the education of children one way or another. The crucial issue is how educators react to this elemental fact. If they point to the influence of families as an excuse for educational failure, they can expect an angry and negative response. But if they reach out to families, recognizing them as "the first educators of their children," and join with them in partnership to ensure educational success, they can usually expect a positive response. Some parents will no doubt say "it's the teachers' job," but that is because many parents, like teachers, have been conditioned to the service delivery approach to education: all they have to do is pay their taxes and send their children to school, and the school will do the educating. Educators will have to be sensitive to the fact that many parents, like teachers, have problems, and not all will conform to the ideal behavior educators may want, but with give and

take, they can come to terms about how to work together, recognizing that they can achieve much more by collaborating than by blaming each other for failure.

The same is true with regard to communities. They, too, are being recognized as powerful and valuable aspects of our society. Even the poorest communities have resources which lie untapped and underutilized in the educational process. The teenage gang that is the terror of the community can, with redirected energies, become the group that patrols the subways or helps old people across the street. Otherwise troublesome teenagers can also be effective tutors of younger children--sometimes more effective than the "good" students who are usually selected as tutors (when any are selected at all, which is all too seldom). A junior high school in New York which had one of the worst records for absenteeism, vandalism and low achievement, now has a functioning "alumni club" which brings back graduates who have gone on to high school to help the younger children with their studies and self-image after school. Local churches, settlement houses, hospitals and merchants can all be powerful allies in helping to improve educational achievement when they are approached as potential partners in a community enterprise, rather than merely as boosters for the school establishment. The fact that community efforts are now being recognized as a legitimate part of the "self-help" movement, rather than merely as recipients of government aid, creates a climate in which schools are more likely to find a positive response, not only from community members and organizations, but from funding sources looking for signs of local initiative and collaboration.

Significant shifts are underway in social policy regarding families and communities. Partnership in education fits into this new thinking, but full advantage of this can be gained only if partnership is seen as a conceptual framework as well as a strategy for action.

III. Partnership as a Conceptual Framework

A. Explaining Past Failures

Many of the skirmishes over educational reform seem like ignorant

armies clashing in the night. No one knowsquite what is wrong; everyone is talking at cross purposes; and no one is listening. Because people are frustrated, they act out of anger and impatience, only to find out that the resulting failure brings more frustration. Some confusion is unavoidable because education is a complex process and we are a complex society with many competing values and interests, but we have borne an unnecessary burden of conflict and confusion from failing to look at underlying causes of our troubles. Too many people see them either in personal terms (this or that bad guy) or in interest group terms (this or that vested interest, pressure group, etc.). As a result, we clash when we need not clash.

The partnership approach helps to explain how all of us have been trapped in a system which perverts the initiatives of teachers, students, parents, and school officials alike, and which obstructs the kinds of relationships which produce educational achievement. The present system casts teachers in an impossible role of magicians who somehow, by delivering their professional services to children, are expected to create learning and excellence. At the same time, they are made little more than bureaucratic functionaries at the bottom of a professional hierarchy, where they are expected to take orders from everyone else, no matter how little they may know of the teacher's special expertise or problems. Principals are supposed to be the "captains of their ships," but are instead made "middle managers" caught between political authority above and organized teachers below. Parents and tax payers are supposed to hold the professionals accountable, and yet when they try they not only fail but are roundly resented for interfering in "professional" matters. School boards are supposed to be in charge, but they are more often governed by the bureaucracies, rather than the other way around. Most impossible, students, who must be the prime actors in the learning process, are made the passive recipients of the services and politics supposedly engaged in on their behalf.

What must be recognized is that the present policy structure is the enemy of all the parties, and all should join together in forging a new framework that assigns legitimate and doable roles for the various participants. The partnership concept helps to do this. It first of

all explains how the "service delivery" model which has taken hold in public education is the source of much of the confusion and frustration. Education cannot be successfully delegated to a separate professional bureaucracy as this model dictates. To the extent it does work today, it is because individual teachers and principals ignore its dictates and create sound working partnerships within classrooms and schools, and between the schools and parents.

B. Providing a Map for Action

Once we accept a partnership as a framework for educational policy, rather than merely an ad hoc solution for "improving home-school relations", we can re-define educational roles on a sounder basis: Teachers can be seen as leaders, not just followers, because they must lead the students in the work of learning. Principals can be seen as leaders of leaders rather than leaders of followers, and they can deal with their teaching staff as responsible professionals who have their own ideosyncratic styles of leadership. Parents can be seen as partners in the educational enterprise, rather than only as taxpayers and complainers. And students can assume their necessary place at the center of the enterprise, as the prime producers of learning, who must be engaged if any learning is to take place.

These changes are not just rhetorical. If taken seriously they have consequences for the way teachers and principals are selected, trained, and supervised, and for the ways in which parents and students are involved in the educational process. Some school officials promote educational partnerships out of their own good instincts, in spite of the prevailing framework. Too often, however, the wrong framework dictates wrong policies and practices. The wrong kind of people are hired, they are badly trained and supervised, and parents and students are pushed out of the process instead of invited in.

The partnership approach, in the long run, would call for a major overhaul of many of the current policies and practices of public schools, but it also shows where action can begin immediately and quite simply without first having to remake the whole system. It suggests, for instance, that educational achievement can be considerably improved if parents and teachers work together to improve it. Some school districts

are doing just this--providing both teachers and parents with profiles showing where students are falling short, showing how each can contribute to helping them, and providing procedures so parents and teachers can consult with each other to get their signals straight. Other simple actions that can be taken include school volunteer programs, peer tutoring, homework helper programs, providing parents with materials to help them work with their children at home, etc. All of these programs require some effort, but none of them requires any major overhaul of the system. What the partnership approach does as a conceptual framework is make clear that these are not just "nice things to do" on the fringe of important educational policy, but are at the heart of a fundamental reform of the system from an ineffective service delivery system to an effective system of educational partnerships.

C. Partnership and the Ideological Challenge to Public Education

Partnership as a conceptual framework also helps deal with the serious ideological challenges to public education that have developed in recent years. Although the system of universal, free education was controversial when it was first established in the mid-nineteenth century, it came to be accepted as a legitimate, if not almost sacred, American institution. This acceptance has now begun to erode. Conservatives claim with increasing boldness that public education violates the most basic prinicples of American freedom, while liberals join them in questioning the legitimacy of majority control over so precious a right as children's education. "The apple on the teacher's desk is rotted out," writes Howard Means in an article entitled, "Let Us Now Bury The Public Schools," while Samuel Blumenfeld writes a book called, "Is Public Education Necessary?" and answers "with a resounding No." Even level-headed historian, David Tyack, says, "there has been a subtle but powerful erosion of the traditional American faith in public education," and Fred Hechinger writes that, "Public education in the United States is in mortal danger." For the first time, the idea of "The public school as the centerpiece of education" is under challenge, says former Education Commissioner Ernest Boyer.

What is being questioned is not just the quality of the school system

but its legitimacy. And, indeed, as currently conceived, public education is vulnerable. It has serious problems that cannot be remedied by new programs and improved services even if they work. Questions are being raised now about educational ideology which are of the most fundamental importance to the future directions of American society, and the traditional approaches to school reform do not even address these questions, let alone answer them.

The partnership concept helps to provide an answer, since it reconceives public education in a way which avoids some of the ideological dilemma. So long as public schools are seen as a government agency to which the public has delegated the function of educating its children, political majorities would seem to have the right and power to mold our children's minds, and this does, indeed, go against the grain of basic American ideals. The partnership approach, however, sees public education as a means of facilitating learning, with significant initiative and responsibility retained by parents and students, so that while the state certainly has a role to play, it is not given carte blanche to control children's learning. This may not satisfy ideological purists who want no public role at all in education, but most people are likely to accept a balance between public and private responsibilities for education.

Admittedly the partnership concept does not provide a clear and crisp answer as to how to strike the exact balance between public and private rights, but this is a strength, not a weakness. American society is going through a period of ideological readjustment in which many institutions are being re-examined--medicine, law, welfare, and the democratic process itself. Old balances between freedom and responsibility are coming unstuck. It should not be expected that it will be easy to reestablish the needed balances between freedom and community responsibility. In a variety of areas beyond education, thoughtful people are beginning to see that new combinations of public and private initiative and collaboration are called for. What is important for education is not to have the complete answers at this time, but to have a policy framework in which they can be sought. The currently dominant delegation and service delivery model of education has severe flaws in

this regard, whereas the partnership model opens up the possibility for new answers whereby parents, students, and teachers, as well as the body politic, can find their proper roles in the education of children.

D. Historic Turning Point for Education

This may all seem a little heady--and far removed from the practicalities of "what we can do on Monday." But we have had a long string of Mondays on which we launched forth with "bold new initiatives"--only to find that little changed. There are times in history when more than action is called for. We are in such a time. Historian David Tyack sees "a major turning point in the history of American education," and Education Secretary Terrel Bell says, "I have never seen the winds of change blowing through education...as they are now." If we are to keep from being blown away by these winds of change, we must find a firmer foundation for educational policy and reform.

The present political climate provides an opportunity to build such a foundation. Admittedly, the climate is negative in many ways. As Ernest Boyer has said, "I do not recall any period when the picture of education was more confused," and Roland Barth reports "a crisis in self confidence." But the confusion and loss of confidence come in part from the fact that important questions are being asked for the first time on a widespread basis. Under such circumstances the worst mistake is to dodge these questions through the supposed pragmatism of devising a bag of tricks for Monday morning. What is needed is a framework for policy that both indicates individual actions we can take on Monday morning, and at the same time brings coherence into these actions. The partnership concept provides such a framework. It shows how many different people and interests can come together in many different ways in a common enterprise. This is a much more promising approach than confused and self-defeating efforts to work through an obsolete service delivery framework. Partnership, once begun, can build momentum, because it is moving in the right direction, whereas random efforts at tinkering with our flawed service delivery model will only dissipate energies and lead to further failure.

IV. How Partnership Relates To Other Reform Strategies

In addition to home-school-community partnership there are a number of other promising school reform strategies which can reinforce and be reinforced by the partnership approach. Partnership is not automatically part of these other strategies, however. It is separate and different, even if related, and it will be effective in helping to resolve America's educational dilemmas only if it is recognized as a reform strategy in its own right.

A. School-Based Planning

Among the remedies for centralized bureaucratic paralysis that gained momentum during the 1960's and 70's is school-based management --sometimes called school-based planning or school councils. Some schools have engaged in staff planning for years, but for systems in which decision-making power has moved increasingly to the top, it is quite an innovation to shift planning down to the school level and to include teachers and parents in the process. Often the planning has been a sham, with only the most trivial decision-making allowed at the school level, or with the principal co-opting the process, but under extensive programs such as the statewide programs in California, South Carolina and Florida, or the Local School Development Program in New York City, considerable participatory school level planning has been fostered, often with excellent results for the education of children.

Participation in planning at the school level obviously involves collaboration of sorts--not necessarily, however, in the learning process itself. As with advisory committees in general, the planning may only deal with the way in which professional services are delivered, and not with ways for changing the relationships between teachers, parents, students, and citizens so that the latter play more responsible roles. Partnership can be a product of school-based planning, but it is not by any means the inevitable result. Furthermore, the good feelings and increased trust that often result from well-conducted participatory planning must not be mistaken for partnership. Given

the tendency for the service delivery approach to continue unless efforts are made to change it, partnership needs to be made a conscious part of school-based planning strategies in order to gain its full advantage.

B. Outcome-Based Learning

Another set of reforms that relate to partnership are those which focus attention on the outcomes of schooling--competency-based instruction, mastery learning, "goal-based education", minimum competency requirements, etc. While these approaches vary, they create an important new dynamic in bureaucratic school systems, which have a tendency to focus on process instead of products--on inputs instead of outputs. Schools can, of course, attempt to improve outputs purely through changes in the professional service delivery inputs, but when there is increased pressure for outputs and a lack of resources for the usual professional inputs, school systems are more willing to consider alternative ways to increase outputs, such as school volunteer programs, peer tutoring, and getting parents involved in the education of their own children.

One of the reasons bureaucratic systems tend to deemphasize learning outputs is that they cannot control them, since learning is produced by the interaction between teachers and students, and students are not subject to bureaucratic control. School systems find it more comfortable to be held accountable for service delivery--teachers, lesson plans, materials and equipment--rather than for learning results, which they say are determined by social and economic factors beyond their control. Once it is decided that learning outcomes must be produced, it is more obvious that the schools have to deal with those factors that help to determine outcomes, such as student motivation, family support, and community context.

There is another way in which outcome-based learning and partnership are related: It is much easier to foster collaborative relationships around agreed-upon goals. Participation for the sake of participation grates on the nerves of both parents and professionals. It can create a dangerous vacuum which can breed frustration and unwelcome power plays. If the purpose for participation is to

achieve agreed-upon and worthwhile educational goals, there is much chance of a successful relationship. Joining together outcome-based and partnership strategies, therefore, provides a powerful combination.

C. School Effectiveness

The latest fad in school reform is "school effectiveness," which urges the astonishing innovation of making schools effective. Underlying this seemingly superfluous notion is a core of solid common sense and political strategy. All too many schools are ineffective, and it is imperative that they be made effective. The things the "school effectiveness" approach calls for--emphasis on learning results, strong leadership, a purposeful, work-oriented environment, etc.--are obviously desirable, and yet not provided in many schools. The strategy of packaging these reforms as a new "system," with all the trappings of in-service training, process facilitators, documentation, extra funds, is no doubt worthwhile therapy, given the bureaucratic paralysis of many school systems.

Schools that are made "effective" under the terms of this new approach will automatically have an increase in partnership in one important respect: the students, who are the most important educational partners, will be more engaged in the learning process. One of the results of the "effectiveness" process is to make clear that the purpose of the school is learning, and the techniques of the approach are designed to make sure that both teachers and students are engaged in achieving this purpose. It is also likely that an "effective" school will have greater support from the parents and community, since they will appreciate the staff's seriousness of purpose, as well as the improved results.

Nevertheless, "school effectiveness" is not the same thing as partnership. Ron Edmonds, one of the leaders of the school effectiveness movement, goes out of his way to point out that the factors shown by his research to be related to effective schools do not include parent participation. He has said that his aim is to make sure that the professional staff does its job, and while he welcomes parent involvement, the lack of it must not be used as an excuse for

professional default. That is a valid concern, and the last thing the partnership approach calls for is any dimunition of professional responsibility. But it does call for a different kind of professional responsibility, and this can be lost sight of in the school effectiveness movement. Like school-based planning and outcome-based learning, school effectiveness can lead to partnership, but it can also lead to an entirely school-oriented approach in which it is assumed that all learning comes from the teachers. While performance can be significantly improved by school effectiveness techniques, the school could still miss the opportunity for substantially increased learning by failing to enlist the unutilized resources of the students, their parents and communities. Partnership, therefore, should be made a conscious part of school effectiveness efforts.

D. Community Education and Community Schools

Another cluster of reforms related to partnership includes community education and community schools. Both of these programs go back to long before the current search for new directions, but they have taken on new interest in view of the need to link schools and communities in more productive relationships.

Most typically, community education has meant the provision of education for adults in the community, and community schools has meant the opening of schools for afterschool activities of all kinds--recreational, academic, adult education, etc. Many of these programs have provided a context for increased partnership between home, school, and community. Often, however, even where partnerships have formed in the afterschool and adult programs, the regular school program for children in grades K through 12 has remained untouched. It is entirely possible to find school systems in which lively programs are conducted in the evening, involving citizens in productive learning experiences, while the regular school program remains an unproductive service delivery system in which many children fail to learn.

Community education has considerable potential for fostering educational partnerships throughout school systems because its staff is often experienced in enlisting community involvement, and its

orientation is often toward partnership. All too often, however, it is never given this assignment; it is kept as a separate, unrelated part of the school system, serving its own clientele, or serving the same clientele with different services, but not "interfering" with the regular school program.

Partnership and community education could become powerful allies. If a school system wants to shift to a partnership approach, it should find its community education staff an important resource for helping to bring the regular school staff and community together in new relationships.

E. Decentralization

The hottest of the participation reforms of the 1960's were decentralization and community control. They had their most explosive manifestation in New York, but the underlying issues reverberated through most of the big city school systems.

In New York the demands for participation included both political participation (voters in New York did not elect school boards) and a call for new relationships between professional staff and parents (the Bundy report called for "partnership," with considerable discussion as to why it was important for the education of urban children). Unfortunately, only the demands for political participation received attention, and it was these that frightened the professional staff (who feared invasion of their turf) and the white population (who feared "Black power"). The partnership idea was lost in the shuffle, and has only begun to reemerge as some of the community school districts have gained some stability and begun to seek ways to increase educational achievement.

The concerns which led to decentralization are still with us--large, unresponsive and ineffective school bureaucracies, often with racial or ethnic tensions between school staffs and communities. Decentralization may be a practical approach in some school districts, but it is important to join any such efforts with partnership strategies. Decentralization by itself may only rearrange the boxes on the chart of an ineffective service delivery system. Or it may be purely a way

of shifting political power without changing the educational system. What is needed is a new kind of system based on partnership. To be successful in improving education, decentralization must be part of a more fundamental change to create this kind of system.

F. Participation in Collective Bargaining

Somewhat related to community control is the idea of parent and citizen representation in the collective bargaining process. In recent years, parents have begun to realize that many of the most important decisions affecting their children are not made through the regular administrative and school board processes but through collective bargaining. While they feel alienated from the regular policy process, they feel totally excluded from collective bargaining, because of its secrecy and its bi-lateral, labor-management structure.

Organizations like the Parents Union in Philadelphia and the United Parents Associations and the Public Education Association in New York have pressed for "opening up" the collective bargaining process so that parents and citizens can at least tell what issues are being decided and express their views. They have also pressed for "management demands" so that the interests of the parents and the public (supposedly represented by "management") can also be brought to the bargaining table.

Some progress has been made in these efforts, but not much. Collective bargaining has its own rules and traditions carried over from industrial labor negotiations, and they don't leave much room for parent participation. Furthermore, educational collective bargaining in its present form is very much the product of the bureaucratized and professionalized service delivery system (which was modeled on the factory system), and it has little to do with partnership. There are signs, however, that teachers as well as parents are becoming more aware of the limitations of collective bargaining for education. It often generates adversarial relationships and hostilities which not only stand in the way of educational partnerships between parents and teachers, but alienate public support from the schools.

With public schools in such jeopardy these days, teacher unions are reaching out for more collaborative relationships with parents and citizens. It could be, therefore, that partnership strategies will be increasingly appealing to teachers and administrators and provide an alternative, and more productive, way for them to relate to their natural partners in the educational enterprise. Perhaps collective bargaining will recede somewhat from its increasingly dominant role in defining the relationships between teachers and the public (perhaps focusing more on its traditional issues of pay and job security), while partnership relations grow to take care of other legitimate staff concerns, such as the need for professionally satisfying working conditions. Since teachers are crucial members of educational partnerships, this is a goal very much to be sought.

G. Other Reform Strategies

There are many other educational reform strategies that can be understood in partnership terms, even though they may at first seem unrelated. One recently publicized new algebra curriculum, for instance, stresses greatly increased practice, with reportedly significant increases in student performance. While the reform is "curriculum," the behavior change is more productive work by the student partners. Computer programs, also, at their best function to engage learners more effectively as partners in the learning process. In teacher training, partnership concepts can help teachers understand that their role is to help students learn--not to serve as bureaucratic functionaries in "delivering educational services." Partnership, because it is truer to the educational process, can help almost any aspect of educational reform.

V. Partnership in Action

Partnership is not just a theory. It has been part of educational practice in many schools and classrooms for years. Much of this partnership activity, however, has been unconscious--prompted by the natural instincts of teachers, principals, students, parents and citizens--rather than by the official policies of school systems. Indeed, it often has to be bootlegged into school practice in spite of a hostile policy framework (e.g. when teachers make home visits against the policy, practice, or union pressures of the system).

This paper, however, focuses on partnership as a reform strategy, which implies conscious implementation of partnership as a way to change existing practices. Such efforts are far more uncommon, and most of them only implement pieces of the partnership idea. There is significant partnership activity, however, at all levels, and there are signs that it is increasing.

There are partnerships of various kinds. School-business, school-university, and school-community partnerships to support public schools are currently receiving considerable attention. These kinds of partnerships, however, useful as they are, can leave school systems relatively unchanged in their fundamental relationships with families, students and communities. Since they are in any case receiving attention elsewhere, this paper will focus on home, school, and community partnerships in which the partners collaborate directly in facilitating learning.

A. Early Childhood

The most obvious place for implementing home-school-community partnerships is in early childhood education, and this, indeed, is where most efforts have been directed. In the broad sense, of course, parent involvement in education is primeval, and social support for this parental responsibility from extended family, community, and cultural institutions is equally ancient. These natural parental and societal processes, however, do not necessarily prepare children for school success. Hence the interest in programs to help parents provide special experiences for their children to increase their chances of

becoming successful academic learners. Some of these parent education and support efforts reach back into the nineteenth century, but the widespread effort to reach large numbers of parents--expecially low income parents--came in the 1960's with the War Against Poverty. Head Start was then, and remains now, the largest and most visible pre-school program, combining publicly provided group experiences and parental involvement of various kinds. Other programs included Home Start, which helped parents provide enriched cognitive experiences in their own homes; Project Enable, to empower parents to deal with their needs; and various kinds of parent and family centers.

There is no clear consensus on the results of these efforts. Some studies seemed to show early cognitive gains which nevertheless faded away as the children progressed in school. Defenders of the programs blamed the schools; others said the programs had not proved their worth. Later, longitudinal studies which followed children into upper grades claimed that the early gains were indeed sustained in reducing the dropout rate, mental illness and handicapped status, but with many different kinds of programs, run in so many different ways, it is hard to generalize either good or bad results across all programs. In any case, there was enough doubt about the value of the programs so that the original hopes for widespread, if not universal, parent and early childhood education waned with the backlash of the 1970's. Some programs continued and even expanded later in the 1970's, but the policy momentum had been lost.

The problem, however, remains. This is especially true with the increasing emphasis on school success for <u>all</u> children. In the days when many children could leave school after six or eight years and make their way in the world with the skills they could pick up naturally from home and community, many educational policy makers were content to let nature take its course: Some children would come to school prepared for academic success, and some would not. The school would educate the first group and screen out the second. This is obviously an oversimplified account, but comes closer to the truth than the rhetoric of."equal education for all." Furthermore, it is adequate for pointing up the contrast with today's demand: educate <u>all</u>--if not to an equal degree, at least to a

degree considerably beyond that achieved by many children in today's schools. To achieve educational success for all children, it only makes sense to find ways to make better use of parental and community resources in the early years.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to go into detail as to what should be done in this area. This will take careful planning in view of the disagreements as to which kinds of programs work best and the conflicts as to which institutions should provide various services (i.e. who will get the jobs). A home-school-community partnership framework, however, should make the development of sound policy in this area easier. If all of education is seen in partnership terms, the need for working out appropriate partnership arrangements for the early years should be more obvious to educational policy makers at all levels. Perhaps the recent interest in Israel's HIPPY program, a program for involving parents in their homes, which ironically began in this country but flourished in Israel, is a sign of renewed interest in finding practical and effective ways to involve families and communities in the education of children during their pre-school years. The Children With Teachers At Home (CWTAH) program, built along somewhat similar lines, has been operating for four years under support from the C. S. Mott Foundation in Spartanburg, S.C. It was sufficiently successful in one school so that it has now been expanded to include five schools. This program operates out of elementary schools to identify pre-school children and help their parents give them enriching educational experiences. In other areas, other community organizations may implement the program.

Meanwhile, it is imperative that whatever is done in the pre-school years be joined with the broader strategy to change the relationships of parents, students, schools, and communities during the school years. While people can dispute the research on many schools' alienating effects on children who have come out of educative and competence-producing pre-school programs, there is too much anecdotal evidence to ignore: The productive parent-teacher relationships that have been created with so much effort are too often destroyed in schools where parents are once again made "bystanders" and treated with disrespect, if not fear and

hostility. When this happens, it does not take research to explain why children's motivation withers and achievement declines. The real test of partnership as an educational reform strategy, therefore, is in the school years.

B. The Changing Rhetoric of Educational Reform

When it comes to changing public schools, there is much appallingly empty rhetoric, and the word "partnership" is likely to turn up in much of it. Nevertheless, rhetoric sometimes reflects the agenda for action, even if the action falls short of expectations, and there has been an appreciable increase in the attention given to partnership in educational rhetoric. To cite some recent examples: The National Commission for Excellence in Education's "Open Letter to the American People," included a special message to parents and students saying their role is "even more important" than that of schools, colleges, teachers, administrators, policy makers and the media. It urged parents to "participate actively" in their children's education, and it urged students to "work to your full capacity," and to "take hold of your life, apply your gifts and talents, work with dedication and self-discipline," recognizing that "in the end it is your work that determines how much and how well you learn." President Reagan, in his radio address of March 12, 1983, emphasized that "education does not begin with Washington officials or even state and local officials. It begins in the home, where it is the right and responsibility of every American."

It is not only conservatives who speak in partnership terms. A review of the articles listed under "Parent Participation in School Activities" in the Education Index, finds the number of articles per year was 7, 9, and 10 for the mid-1960's, compared to 19, 18, and 26 for the mid-1970's. The task force of governors, business and labor leaders formed at the end of 1982 to improve education, announced that one of its goals is "to promote more cooperation among parents and representatives of communities, business, industry, labor, education and government to improve schools." The fact that partnership is part of the rhetoric of both liberals and conservatives is a hopeful sign that the strategy can gain widespread support.

It is right to be concerned that much of the rhetoric about partnership is only that--spurred by panic over the loss of public support and a desire to win it back. It is right to be even more concerned if nothing comes of all this talk; the disillusionment and cynicism will grow even worse if "partnership" turns out to be only slick public relations and more skillful efforts to co-opt parents and citizens. Nevertheless, there are signs that genuine efforts are being made to translate rhetoric into reality in many places, at least at the local and state levels.

C. Local School System Action

Various partnership activities have been initiated in school systems for some years--school volunteer programs, peer tutoring, parents-as-reading-partners, etc.--and they seem to be increasing. Even more encouraging is the number of school systems which are expanding such activities as part of system-wide reform strategies built on the partnership concept. Useful as almost any partnership activities can be, they are more likely to fulfil their potential when they are seen as an important and integral part of a system-wide strategy for improving education, rather than as a fringe activity fostered by a school-community relations department or a particular school official or community organization.

A useful collection of information on school system actions in this area is found in The Home-School Connection, published by the Institute for Responsive Education and based on information developed by the National Institute of Education from 28 local programs. This report and other information on local school system programs reveals a wide range of activities and program goals: Some programs particularly stress academic achievement (e.g. Operation Fail-Safe in Houston, the Partnership Program in San Diego, the Home Study Program in New Orleans, and Parent Plus in Chicago); some stress social development and behavior (e.g. Project ACT in Jacksonville, Florida, the Home-School-Community Agents Project in Columbus, Ohio, and the ESAA Guidance and Human Relations Program in San Antonio, Texas); and some stress attendance and enrollment (e.g. the Attendance Monitors Program and Project FAME in Baltimore, the School-Community Coordinator Service in Philadelphia, and the Parents in Touch program in Indianapolis). Virtually all of these programs

recognize that these goals are interrelated, and use the home-school connection as a way to work on whatever element is needed to help the child succeed. Sometimes for students merely to know that their teachers and parents care about them and are in communication with each other about their problems is enough to improve their attendance, behavior, and achievement.

An interesting aspect of the 28 programs described in the Home-School Connection is that they all operate at the upper elementary or secondary level, where many educators think partnership activities are not feasible.

Some of the activities used by local school systems to promote partnership include:

1. Parent workshops and training. This can include little more than orientation all the way up to quite formal courses of instruction. Parent Plus in Chicago runs classes which participating parents are expected to attend once a week to review basic skills and go over homework assignments they will later help their children with at home. Philadelphia's Parent Partnership Program runs parent workshops throughout the system to help parents understand child development and how to make use of learning materials in the home. New Haven, Connecticut sponsors "make it and take it" workshops to help parents make reading games, puzzles, puppets, etc. to take home and use with their children. Partnership programs in New York City have found the need to provide English-As-A-Second-Language course for parents in non-English speaking areas so that parents can participate in school activities and communicate with teachers about their children.

Some programs operate with very little parent training, or count on the materials provided to parents to give them whatever orientation and information they are going to get.

One problem, of course, is that the parents who need help the most are often those who do not have the time or inclination to participate in workshops. Most programs, bowing to reality, start with those parents who are interested, and depend on word of mouth to spread the word as to the value of the workshops or training sessions. Flexibility in finding

convenient times and places for parents to meet helps to convince them that the schools are serious in wanting to involve them.

2. Staff Training. Training for teachers and other staff members is often more important than parent training, since they seldom have experience or pre-service training in working with parents and community (or even with students on a partnership basis). Most school systems which have undertaken extensive partnership programs have some sort of orientation to help teachers understand the purposes and techniques of the programs, and key staff are usually given special workshops and training. Seldom is training provided for all school staff, however, either because of the expense, or because it is not felt to be needed.

As with parent involvement, some systems use the technique of starting with those teachers who have skills and interest in working with parents, and letting the process grow gradually as other teachers see the benefit of this approach. With system-wide efforts like Fail-Safe in Houston and Parents in Touch in Indianapolis, however, this gradual process is not workable, and ways have to be found to orient, win over, and train the whole staff to a new way of operating.

3. Materials. Many school systems, as part of their partnership programs, have developed special materials for parents to use at home with their children. New Haven gives all parents, when they register students for kindergarten, a booklet called Read to Succeed, which stresses the important role of parents in their children's learning and suggests games and activities to foster reading readiness. District 12 in the South Bronx in New York, which started with such materials for kindergarten parents (in both Spanish and English) has now expanded the idea to Home Study Books for grades 1, 2, and 3, grades 4 and 5, and grades 6, 7 and 8. The manual for kindergarten parents is entitled District, School, Home: Bringing Worlds Together, and superintendent Peter Negroni in his opening message says, "As participants in the noble mission of educating our children, parents and teachers must join in stressing COLLABORATION among the HOME, the SCHOOL, and the DISTRICT. In the best interest of 'These Our Children', we can, and we must have such collaboration! We have prepared this handbook with the intention of making you an active partner in your child's education."

In some systems the materials for use at home are closely correlated with the school curriculum. The Home Study Program in New Orleans, for instance, provides self-instructional home study lessons written to match each of the objectives in the system's reading, language arts, and math curriculum. Each lesson has the objective at the top of the page with examples the parents can work on with their children. Each week parents receive a computerized report indicating which materials their children have mastered, and recommending home study lessons for those they haven't.

4. Media campaigns. In addition to study materials provided to individual parents, some systems have used the media to get the message across. Parents in Touch in Indianapolis ran an extensive media campaign prior to the day set for parent-teacher conferences, with TV commercials and appearances on local radio and television talk shows. Houston's Operation Fail-Safe, on which the Indianapolis program was based, had a local advertising agency design a "total public awareness campaign" to launch the program, with a Fail-Safe logo, a slogan, "Don't Fail Me - Help Me," and $1,700,000 worth of public service advertising. Houston also produced extensive materials to explain its program in greater depth than was possible on TV spots. One pamphlet went out of its way to point out how the program departed from past philosophy: "For too long, now, many educators have established the schoolhouse as their exclusive domain. The parent's role in a child's education has not been encouraged or supported. The old adage, 'teacher knows best', has unfortunately become an exclusionary phrase that has left parents out of the most important aspect of their child's development--teaching him/her to learn. Operation Fail-Safe is an effort to turn this situation around. . . . parent support is needed. More than that, it's critical." The pamphlet goes on to say that "traditional modes of parent participation were becoming increasingly unrealistic," and that is why the new program was devised, with "shared accountability," i.e. "teachers and parents are both responsible for what 'our' children do," and a "goal-oriented" approach, i.e. "teacher, parent, and child all know where they are going, thus they have a better chance of getting there."

Whether intended or not, media campaigns probably affect school staff as much as parents, students, and citizens. They can help the staff understand what the changes are about and why they are important for carrying out the schools' mission. They can also let skeptical staff

members know that school officials and community leaders (including teachers leaders if at all possible) are serious in their intention to create a new approach to education based on partnership between home, school, and community.

5. School-Community Coordinators. Most programs have found the need for coordinators to facilitate the change-over to partnership relations. They are no substitute for the support of teachers and principals, but they can help teachers reach out and involve parents and community resources. They can also provide training for volunteers, peer tutors, or community liaison people. The coordinators are often parents or community people themselves, without professional education training, but selected for their skills and sensitivity in dealing with parents and community people. Some programs also provide social workers or paraprofessionals to help with special home problems that prevent parents from becoming empowered teachers of their own children.

6. Parent Resource Rooms. Parents have to feel welcome in schools before they can participate as partners. One way to do this is to provide a parent's room, often with a coffee pot and places to sit, where parents or parents and teachers can meet and talk informally. If these are viewed by parents as places "they can call their own," visiting the school does not seem so much like invading someone else's turf. Resource rooms can also provide materials and information for parents, not only on helping their children, but for meeting their own needs (employment, housing, complaints, alcohol counseling, etc.). School visits can also be facilitated by providing baby sitting services while parents visit the school (which can sometimes be done in secondary schools with student volunteers as part of experimental learning). Even without special rooms and services, parents can be made to feel more welcome in schools, e.g., some New Haven schools have a special "Be My Guest" program to facilitate parents visiting classrooms and meeting with the principals or school staff over coffee in the cafeteria to discuss the program.

7. Home visits. Some districts have included home visits in their program designs. These are costly, but they are valuable for reaching parents who are reluctant to come to school. The costs can be reduced by using paid staff to train volunteers for some of the home visits. The School-Community

Coordinator Service in Philadelphia conducts meetings with clusters of parents off school premises, as a sort of compromise between school and home meetings.

Home visits can be used for training parents to help their children, to help solve home problems, or to refer parents to other agencies for help. Usually those who visit homes end up doing all of these things, depending on the need.

Visiting homes can be viewed as an intrusion by some parents, but these feelings can be reduced by careful selection of staff and volunteers. If parent volunteers are used for making home visits to other parents, some people may view this not only as an intrusion but an invasion of privacy: Why should Mrs. Jones know that Mrs. Smith's child is having problems; is that not a matter between Mrs. Smith and the school? But people helping people always run the risk of invading privacy. The answer lies in the spirit of the program and community support for achieving a common objective of successful learning for all children.

8. Dial-A-Teacher. Philadelphia, New York, and many other systems have adopted Dial-A-Teacher programs to help students (and their parents) with homework problems. Sometimes the program is sponsored by the school system and sometimes by the teachers organization. It provides a very simple (and not too costly) way not only to provide useful help, but to symbolize the "we're-here-to-help-you-learn" role for teachers. Like many programs, it may be that the students who need help the most are less likely to take advantage of it, but if well publicized as part of general partnership approach dedicated to successful learning for all students, it can be a relatively trouble-free and positive program.

9. School Councils and Committees. Committees made up of school staff and parents (and sometimes students and community representatives) are increasingly used by school systems, but not always to promote educational partnerships. Sometimes their official purpose is to work on some specific school program or to provide advice. Nevertheless, partnership ideas often evolve from them, and they are often a good way to plan partnership activities with input from the various constituencies that have to work

together. Sometimes a considerable period of trust-building is necessary before any effective partnership can even be discussed. Once plans are agreed to, joint committees can also be used for carrying out various partnership functions. The Home Study Program in New Orleans, for instance, used committees of parents and teachers to write the home study lessons. A Two-Way Street, published by the Institute for Responsive Education (1980), provides both theory and implementation strategies as to how school councils can be used for collaborative curriculum development. (For discussion of state programs to support school councils, see section V. E. 2. below.)

10. School Volunteers. One of the most obvious home-school-community partnership programs used in many districts, but still surprisingly unused or underused in most school systems, is a school volunteer program. Since these are extensively described elsewhere, no space will be taken with them here, but they should be considered an essential element of any partnership strategy. Volunteers can be used not only in providing direct help to students (tutoring, counseling, mentoring, health screening, home visits, etc.), but in facilitating other partnership activities (liaison with community groups and local businesses, outreach to parents, publicity, etc.).

11. Peer Tutoring, Counseling, Etc. Like adult volunteer programs, involvement of students in peer turoring and other helping roles is a common activity of school systems oriented toward partnership, but is little utilized in most systems. Peer programs have the double benefit of helping both tutor and tutee. As the Public Education Association in New York and others have discovered, the tutors need not be high achieving students. Students who themselves are still trying to master their subjects can help themselves as well as the students they tutor if they are properly trained. The experiential learning from peer tutoring is also invaluable. Often tutoring is the first responsible job peer tutors have, and they learn much from it that is transferable to later employment (reliability, responsibility for results, leadership, sensitivity, self-confidence, the satisfaction of accomplishing worthwhile goals, etc.) Peer tutoring requires skillful leadership and some training for the tutors, but the

investment is small compared to the benefits. In addition to the value these programs have for the students directly involved, they also help to symbolize for all students that learning is not something that is delivered by professionals to students.

12. Team Learning, and Cooperative Classrooms. At the heart of the learning process is the partnership between student and teacher. If learning is the goal (which too often it isn't), this "product" of the learning process is ultimately produced in the student's head by the student's mental efforts. The student, therefore, is the "prime producer" of learning. Teachers, and everyone else involved (parents, peers, TV, rock stars, etc.), only facilitate or obstruct the production of learning by the learner.

In one-to-one tutoring, this fundamental structure of learning and teaching is easier to see and feel. If no learning is going on, it is harder for the tutor to avoid noticing it and doing something about it. In a classroom of 30 students, it is easier for a teacher to "teach" without students learning. Teaching has become a bureaucratically defined function (lesson plans, professionally approved activities) which can be performed whether students are learning or not. Hence, much of real teaching consists of trying to establish the crucial partnership between teacher and students that exists in a good tutoring situation, with the teacher helping students learn, rather than just "teaching at" them. A class of 30, however, is very different from one-on-one tutoring. The relationship is not between teacher and one student, but a teacher and a group of students. The dynamics of the group, therefore, become crucial. They can obstruct or facilitate educational partnerships.

It is assumed by many people that American values require the classroom to be almost wholely competitive, with students competing with each other for a limited number of places at the top. This foreordains winners and losers. Some educators have challenged this view--at least as the appropriate model for elementary and secondary schools. If the goal is to ensure that all students learn--at least to an agreed-upon adequate level--then why cannot classrooms be cooperative human groups, working together to achieve this goal, rather than collections of competing

individuals? The Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University has worked on this question and developed alternative models for group cooperation within classrooms (e.g. the so-called "tea games tournaments" approach, where students compete in groups within classrooms, rather than as individuals).

This concept deserves more discussion than space here permits. Suffice it to say that cooperation is not un-American, and productive classrooms and schools dedicated to the educational success of all students does not preclude individuals trying to excel if they want to, even while they help one another to succeed. School systems which have tried this approach find it a powerful form of educational partnership, since the attitudes and behavior of other students in the classroom are among the most potent determinants of educational success.

13. Student, Parent and Teacher Choice. One of the ways in which students, parents, and teachers can develop a greater sense of shared purpose and common commitment is through choice. Both Minneapolis and Indianapolis have adopted choice systems in which parents can select from a number of alternative programs the one they think best serves their child's needs. Community District 4 in East Harlem, New York, now has all of its junior high schools on a choice basis, with a number of specialized mini-schools as well as regular junior highs, and 25% of the parents have chosen programs other than their neighborhood school. Part of the secret of District 4's success (it has significantly raised its achievement scores) is that teachers as well as parents and students have choices. The mini-schools and special programs are mostly initiated by teachers who think they have a better way to reach students, or special talents that are not being utilized in the regular program. If they can sell their ideas to the parents and students, they are in business. The Community Superintendent who has presided over this development, Anthony Alvarado, has now been appointed Chancellor of the New York City system, and he has announced his intention to develop more choice throughout the system.

All of these partnership activities deserve more discussion than space in this report permits. However, in all the detail about individual programs, several general lessons come through:

1. Support from the system is important. A program like Operation Fail-Safe is Houston has grown and prospered because of the active support of the Superintendent, Mr. Billy Reagan, who clearly believes in this approach. The same is true of the Salt Lake City programs under the leadership of Superintendent Donald Thomas, and many other programs.

2. Partnership gains support when it is linked with other important goals, such as improved student learning or improved support for the schools. Not many people are interested in partnership or participation for its own sake, but when it is seen as a means for achieving other important objectives it can become a significant priority. In Houston, for instance, Operation Fail-Safe is linked with a city-wide drive to improve academic achievement--something which the business community and the citizenry at large see as a priority. In Jacksonville, the program began with a community concern for improved student behavior.

3. Careful planning helps. This includes assessing the needs that partnership can help to address, and planning the steps for gaining support for the program, selecting and training staff and participants, producing materials, and evaluating the program as it develops.

4. Participation in planning and implementation. Since partnership requires the cooperation of various types of people--parents, teachers, students, local business people, etc.--it helps to have representatives of these various groups involved in planning and implementing the program. In situations where partnership is needed the most, distrust levels are often the highest, and time and effort devoted to involving people and developing a sense of ownership is usually well spent.

5. A variety of participation activities provides more chance of success, since parents, community people and teahcers have a variety of capacities, interests, and time constraints. Furthermore, partnership breeds more partnership; the more people experience the benefits of working together, the more they participate.

Other lessons are set forth in The Home-School Connection and other reports of the Institute for Responsive Education, and in the research discussed in Section VI of this paper. The one over-all lesson which must be kept in mind for local initiatives is that every district is different;

each one presents its own set of problems and opportunities. The virtue of the partnership approach, however, is that any school system can implement it, even if each must implement it in its own way. Furthermore, it can usually be implemented with available resources. If some partnership activities require more resources than are currently available, a start can be made with low cost initial steps.

D. Rural Programs

The programs described in The Home-School Connection are from large cities, as are most school projects reported in the media. Some interesting partnership work, however, has also been done in rural areas.

Some schools in rural areas have preserved close home-school-community ties from an earlier era, but with consolidation (from over 100,000 school districts in the 1940's to 15,000 today), many rural districts have suffered some of the same alienation, along with the benefits, of larger systems in the urban areas.

An example of a school district which tried to counter this alienation is the Columbia-Brazoria School District in southeastern Texas--covering 315 square miles and serving 12,000 students when the project began in 1965, many of them from poor rural families. The effort was started with funds from Title I of ESEA, but the school system did not rush to add new remedial education services in the schools, as nearly all other schools did with their new money. First it formed a community-wide committee to plan what to do. The planners "tried to reach a real understanding of the unique problems of the disadvantaged." "They realized that special programs, special classes, and special in-school services for children with limited backgrounds generally failed to effect much change in attitudes toward school and learning." Since the purpose of the project was "to make school and education meaningful to deprived children," and since they felt that "the child cannot be reached in school," they concluded that "school must be taken to the child and its value must be demonstrated." The Title I funds, therefore, were used to enable teachers to visit the homes of children during the summer with school aides, 'carefully selected for their ability to relate to people." The effort was called "Project Bootstrap," and its visitors were not always welcome to begin with.

"The function of the aide was to establish a relationship with the family. This was not a simple task, since the aide presented herself or himself to parents as a representative of the school, and school representatives are not welcome in many low-income homes." "When someone from the school makes a 20-mile drive to visit, the mother is skeptical. Past experience with schools has conditioned her to suspect that her youngster must be in trouble. She cannot conceive that anyone would call solely out of interest in her eight-year old. . . . Knowing this feeling existed, the aide made an initial call at each home before any problem arose." Once a solid relationship was established by the aide, the teacher was introduced, and some simple home-learning was begun.

From these experiences school personnel "rediscovered the truism that all parents, no matter their own backgrounds, want the best for their children." They "were astonished by how much they learned and what it suggested for school-community cooperation." The result was "a near miracle of school-home-community cooperation," as the entire operation of the school system was turned around. A link was forged with the branch of the University of Texas Medical School in the area, committees were formed, including student problem-solving groups. Local businesses and citizens were brought in that "became a working part of the school team" and "worked for their schools in new and undreamed of ways." With all these new resources working together, this educational partnership was able to tackle health, attendance, and learning problems that were far beyond the reach of the schools when they functioned only to deliver educational services to people. "Resources were marshalled through the use of creative forces in persons. . . . Untried ideas of education created even newer ideas of total learning and teaching by men, women, and children in every aspect of community living."

The story of Columbia-Brazoria is the story of a school system which decided to go about its business in a new way, and all of its participants were astonished by the power that comes from this different approach.

E. State Support of Partnership

While any local school system can implement a partnership approach, few of them have done so. Hence, the interest in encouraging, supporting,

or mandating partnership from the state of federal levels. There are two major kinds of state initiative in this area: (1) direct encouragement of partnership, and (2) indirect support of partnership through school site councils.

1. Direct Encouragement of Partnership

Among the states that have made efforts from the state level to encourage partnership at the local level are Utah, Alaska, and Alabama.

One of the activities of the Utah State Office of Education in encouraging partnership is a series of workshops run by the Community Education Section for school, community and parent leaders. In 1981 the specific theme was "Home-School-Community Partnership." In introducing the workshop materials, State Superintendent Walter Talbot pointed out the importance of involving "parents and the community at large in the learning of our students and in the activities of our schools." The state Coordinator for Community Education said, "Effective education will only happen when the school, the home and the community join hands with the express purpose of causing it to happen." The materials provide "examples of how to effectively involve the public, home and community, in an educational partnership." Included are speeches and articles on the importance of partnership, on parents as "important teachers," the positive relationship between parent participation and student achievement, volunteer programs, use of TV in the home for educational purposes, the use of various community resources for education, and home-school-community participation in planning and decision making.

Alaska also promotes home-school-community partnership, as part of its Effective Schooling program. A Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling recommended that official state education policy reflect that education is a "shared responsibility with other segments of society," and that, although "school staffs are expected to make every effort to insure that learning is likely to occur," "the student, ultimately, must assume responsibility for his or her learning." The materials sent out to local school systems features a section on "School Environment: We're all in this together," which says that, "In effective schools, everyone works together to get the job done. Students, staff and parents all take

part. . . . Learning takes teamwork. In effective schools, everybody counts." Parents are expected to "know their responsibilities for helping students learn."

While Utah and Alaska have statewide programs to spread the word about partnership, the Alabama State Department of Education has attempted a more targeted approach, called the Parenting and Learning Project (PAL), to introduce partnership policies and practices into a few schools in the state, with a view to spreading the practices once they have been developed in these demonstration schools. The state's Community Education Section trained and provided materials for staff, parent and community participants in each of the demonstration schools, and then helped them plan local programs for each school, with a special focus on single parent families (of which there were 50%, 33% and 33% respectively in each of the pilot schools). The activities included such things as home visits, after school activities, volunteer programs, workshops on student self-concept and other parenting topics, a School-is-a-Family-Affair Calendar provided to all parents with reminders for activities on each day, a school newspaper, etc. While the effort was concentrated on the three pilot schools, the project was talked about at various statewide meetings, and a Community Education Parenting Resource Guide and "Parenting and Learning" brochure were sent to all Alabama superintendents and statewide groups as a way of introducing them to partnership concepts. The program is only in its second year, but results so far look favorable in terms of increased parent involvement, improved student attendance and behavior; and other school discticts in the state have expressed interest in implementing the program for their schools.

The New York State Education Department is developing a quite ambitious State Plan for Building School/Community Partnerships, under the leadership of the Board of Regents and the Division of Continuing Education. Based on the premise that today's world requires much higher levels of learning and that "successful learning requires a close partnership among home, school, and community," the plan focuses on strategies to increase the ways in which schools can be a resource to the community and the community a resource to the school. These include "sponsoring a wide range of parent education activities to build a home-school partnership,"

"tapping volunteer resources in community," and use of the community school concept. The extensive network of community education directors and coordinators throughout the state would be used to help implement the plan on a statewide basis, with leadership activities to involve and gain the support of superintendents, school boards, teachers, administrators, parents, and community organizations. Simultaneously with developing this plan, key staff of the State Education Department's Division of Continuing Education have been active with other educational leaders in helping to form a statewide coalition of parent, teacher, school board, administrators, and state agencies to promote the concept of home-school-community partnership to help "Break the Cycle of Failure". (See 5. H. 7 below).

2. Support of Partnership Through School Councils

In addition to direct fostering of the partnership concept, several states have mandated and supported the establishment of school councils to promote participatory planning by teachers, parents, and community representatives at the school level. In most cases these state actions grew out of school finance reform, and evolved from the conflicting pressures of increased state financial involvement, increased demands for accountability, fears of state control, and demands for citizen and parent participation in decision-making. The various participants in school councils, therefore, may have a variety of goals in mind, only one of which is partnership. Nevertheless, increased partnership is one of the things that can, and has, come out of school councils, and therefore state action to promote them has in effect fostered partnership between home, school, and community.

Luckily, the three states which have been most active in the school council movement--California, Florida, and South Caroline--have participated in a project funded by the C. S. Mott Foundation through which the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) has helped and monitored the school council programs. A good deal, therefore, has been written about these programs which need not be repeated here. What is important to note in this report is IRE's thoughtful analysis as to what school councils can, and cannot, realistically be expected to do. Based on its observation of the functioning of the councils in the three states, and

and its assessment of the present nature of most public school systems, the IRE concludes that councils "cannot be expected to have a significant role in educational policy decisions about program, budget, or staff, . . . Nor . . . a realistic role in school management or administration." The IRE concludes, therefore, that perhaps the best role for school councils is to serve "as vehicles for 'co-production' whereby parents act as partners rather than advisors to, or watchdogs of, schools' efforts to improve instruction"--a concept very similar to partnership as defined in this paper. The IRE suggests that "the groundwork has been laid--institutional mechanisms are in place, precedents have been set, and a consensus is emerging--for the evolution of councils" into this role.

It is possible, therefore, that while school councils reflect a variety of motives and goals, the most practical goal for them to focus on is the fostering of educational partnership. This is a goal they can pursue without threatening the official governance structure of the school system, and which they are admirably situated to undertake, since they include the very constituents who must be involved in educational partnerships. The interplay between state mandate and local initiative which already characterizes school council programs would be well suited to fostering the partnership concept. Perhaps if school councils had this as their clearly defined purpose, more states would adopt programs to promote them.

State governments have been playing an increasingly important role in education in recent years after a period of relative quiescence (preceeded, of course, by a hundred years from the 1850's to the 1950's in which they played the major role in shaping the present public education system). Educational partnerships themselves are very local, occurring most potently at the school, classroom,neighborhood, family, and even one-to-one levels. But they need encouragement and support, which they do not get from the prevailing structure of public education. As we have seen, some local school systems have supported partnerships in varying degrees, but they are thus far the exception, not the rule. Furthermore, the basic structure of public education was established, and is maintained, primarily through state law and regulation. The states, therefore, are in many ways the most appropriate governmental units to provide leadership

and assistance in reshaping public education along partnership lines. The experience of California, Florida and South Carolina in promoting school councils provides a base on which such support could be built.

F. Federal Action

The Federal government has done very little to further the partnership concept in public education. During the 1960's and 1970's it did mandate "parent involvement" in Head Start, Title I and a number of other programs, but even before these requirements were "deregulated" by the Reagan Administration, their meaning and enforcement were by no means clear. As the Institute for Responsive Education reported in 1977, "At no point has there been coherent policy on participation across or within Federal departments or bureaus. Policies, programs, research and development efforts seem to follow separate tracks. Regulations or guidelines for participation are often ambiguous, frequently different or contradictory from one program to another and inevitably confusing for those charged with implementation. . . . The rhetoric of participation masks ambiguity of purposes as well as a poverty of means."

To the extent that one could tell what kind of participation was called for, it by and large had little to do with partnership. The main requirements were for "advisory committees," which usually meant participation of parent representatives in the planning and supervision of the programs, rather than collaboration of parents generally in carrying them out or in the actual learning-teaching process. The General Education Provisions Act, which attempted to consolidate many of these provisions (and whose application has been at issue between Congress and the Administration) requires "(1) policies and procedures which insure parent involvement in program planning and operation, (2) assurances that parents have had the chance to present their views concerning the application, and (3) policies and procedures for adequate dissemination of program plans and evaluations to parents and the public." This speaks more to participation in governance (although admittedly weak) than to participation in the educational process itself.

It is not surprising that the federal mandates in this area have focused mainly on governance; nor is it surprising that they have been weak, uncertain and unenforced. The mandates came from pressures of

parents and citizens who were frustrated by the unresponsiveness of local school authorities. They hoped that the new federal education interventions might provide a wedge to help them get more of a voice in their local school affairs. They turned to the federal rather than to state government because the federal level was "where the action was," and it had traditionally been seen as a defender of the poor and minorities, whereas the states were seen as part of the same establishment that was oppressing or ignoring them at the local level. It took political action to get the mandates written into federal law, and it was political involvement which most groups were looking for.

Political involvement, however, was not something the federal government could readily grant. The basic structure of most of the new federal aid programs at the elementary and secondary school levels was <u>through</u> state and local school systems, and these systems already had their official systems of governance which they were not about to give up or compromise. With a few exceptions, therefore, (e.g. Head Start, where program philosophy and procedures were different), the federal requirements disappointed those seeking to change the governance behavior of local school systems. Indeed, some analysts believe that, by drawing leadership away from their own indiginous organizations and co-opting them, the mandates may have "produced a net loss of power for the urban poor and the demise or weakening of voluntary citizen groups concerned about school issues" in many cities.

What about partnership? While partnership might have faired better, because it would not have threatened state and local governance structures, it was by and large not part of the agenda either of the local groups demanding participation or the federal officials designing the programs (Head Start again being an exception). On the contrary, most federal education programs, because of their structure, end up reinforcing the service delivery approach to education: The federal government provides resources so that local school systems can provide more services to "target" populations. There was little thought of requiring or encouraging local districts to redesign their programs along partnership lines, and the new federal money coming in for added services tended to divert attention away

from whatever local initiatives there were for partnership. "Services" was the name of the game, both for those who got the jobs to "deliver" them, and for those who received their supposed benefits.

Although there was very little in the structure of most federal programs suggesting partnership, the Title I office in 1980 did publish Working With Schools: A Parents' Handbook, which addressed parents as their "child's first--and most long term--teachers" and provided tips on both their "right to expect a good education for your child, and . . . responsibility to help your child succeed in school." This handbook grew out of a meeting with interested local and university officials, but it is not clear how much it has been put to use in local school systems.

Could the Federal government do more to encourage partnership if it wanted to? It probably could; since the concept has a chance of being acceptable across a wide political spectrum and would help to deal with the concern about the ineffectiveness of many federal programs. The generally well-received experience of the Head Start Program, which comes closest to the partnership idea among the federal programs, may provide a basis for spreading this concept to other programs. The Reagan Administration, however, is currently focusing on a different way to get parents involved in education: through tuition tax credits and vouchers. Although choice is one of the ways to foster partnership in education, these proposals would primarily encourage choice of private schools, and many believe would weaken public schools. The threat which these proposals pose to public school officials may indirectly encourage partnership by calling to their attention the need for developing more mutually supporting relationships in the public schools.

One area where the federal government is currently providing direct assistance and encouragement to the partnership idea in public education is in the National Institute of Education--particularly its Families as Educators Team, under the direction of Oliver Moles, which has sponsored some of the research discussed in section VI below and serves as a mini-clearinghouse for information on partnership and participation. In this sense it functions as an "intermediary organization"--a type of organization which can play an important role in promoting the partnership concept.

G. Support or Intermediary Organizations

In addition to implementation of partnership concepts by various governmental units at local, state, and federal levels, important support is being provided by non-governmental agencies. Indeed, the initiative, encouragement and assistance for governmental action has often come from these independent agencies. They have helped to define the concepts and methodology of partnership (by various names), called people's attention to them, gotten them on the agenda of other organizations and school policy bodies, provided technical assistance and training, exchanged ideas, and monitored and evaluated implementation efforts, etc. In most cases the mission of these organizations is broader than home-school-community partnership (usually including various other kinds of parent and citizen involvement in education), and their activities related to partnership are usually intertwined with the other agendas. Nevertheless, encouragement of partnership concepts and practices is an identifiable and important part of their work.

Examples of some of these organizations, operating at the national, state, and local levels include:

1. Institute for Responsive Education (IRE).

The Institute of Responsive Education is a national organization, which has recently merged with the National Commission on Resources for Youth, giving it a combined mailing list of 50,000 and a wide network of organizations and people throughout the country with which it exchanges ideas and collaborates on projects.

The IRE has been interested in all kinds of citizen prticipation in education. One of its major activities in recent years has been a project funded by the Charles Steward Mott Foundation to assist and monitor the development of school councils, particularly in the three states--California, Florida, and South Carolina--that have mandated such councils from the state level. (See Section V. E. above). Out of this work has come a wealth of experience, many meetings to exchange ideas, and a number of publications, most notably, Sharing the Power (1977, which reviewed the development of school councils nationally), and Leading the Way (1980, which reviewed the progress and problems in the three state-mandated states).

As has been pointed out, school councils are not synonymous with educational partnership; there can be councils without partnership, and partnership without councils. Nevertheless, school councils are a natural place for the initiation and nurturing of partnership, since they involve the key partners--teachers, parents, administrators, community representatives, and sometimes students. Partly for this reason, and partly because of recognition of the importance of collaborative educational relationships for other reasons (research evidence, the greater interest of most parents in educational rather than political involvement, the economic need for utilizing non-budget resources, etc.), the IRE has been giving increasing attention to a concept it calls "co-production," which is closely akin to partnership. As defined by IRE, co-production refers to the contributions that clients and consumers make to the "production of services," whereas partnership as defined in this paper refers to collaboration in the production of learning. Nevertheless, much of the actual behavior encompassed in IRE's concept fits within the definition of partnership, and many of the elements of the concept are identical, such as shared responsibility and accountability, and the idea that "co-production is not giving advice . . . to school administators about school policies or administrative practices."

IRE's interest in co-production/partnership has led it to publish two important books relating to the subject: The Home-School Connection (1982--described in Section V. C. above) and A Two-Way Street (1980--which contains a number of essays on home-school cooperation in curriculum decision making.) It has featured the subject in its newsletter, Citizen Action in Education, and in its public presentations, panels, articles, etc. It has also forged closer links with other organizations interested in partnership, such as the Committee for Citizens in Education, The National School Volunteer Program, and the Home and School Institute.

In its current work, IRE is seeking ways to link school councils with two other important areas of education: school improvement and community education. Since school councils can initiate and support school improvement, and community education can provide experienced resources to help them do so, this looks like a particularly potent combination. It also provides a good mix of forces and concerns for promoting partnership.

Partnership flourishes best where there are important common goals, and the school improvement movement, especially when it emphasizes achievement, provides such goals. Community education could provide potentially strong allies for helping the various parties to work along partnership lines.

IRE has recently undertaken to join with the National School Volunteer Program and the National Committee for Citizens in Education in a Consortium for School Improvement, whereby they would combine their efforts for "strengthening the quality of public schools and increasing opportunities for the participation of young people and adults . . ." If these three organizations succeed in this effort, they will be in an even stronger position to promote and support partnership ideas. All three organizations have talented, experienced and committed staffs, and their combined constituencies provide a widespread network of people who could help to translate the vision of educational partnership into reality.

2. National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE).

The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) is also a national organization whose mission includes all kinds of citizen and parent involvement in education. It has linked together a Parents Network of over 300 local parent and citizen groups in 47 states, and it facilitates the flow of information, ideas, and program initiatives between and among these and other organizations through its newspaper, Network, published ten times a year, and through numerous handbooks, studies, bibliographies, seminars and training sessions. It also monitors federal legislative and administrative actions affecting citizen and parent participation. Its most direct support for the partnership concept was the publication of Parent Participation--Student Achievement: The Evidence Grows, a review of 35 studies which is discussed in Section VI. A. 1 below.

3. The National School Volunteer Program (NSVP).

The school volunteer movement is directed toward a particular type of citizen and parent involvement: direct volunteering to tutor or provide other services to children. As such, its activities are wholly within the partnership concept. In most school systems, school volunteer programs have seen their mission as helping children, not changing teachers or schools. Yet, when volunteers are in a school, a spirit of partnership often grows naturally, as teachers, administrators, parents and community people find they can work together productively. As a result, volunteer

programs often benefit schools far beyond the direct services they provide to children. In recent years, the National School Volunteer Program has capitalized on this inherent potential of the volunteer movement to promote broader collaboration between schools, businesses, community and parent organizations. It has held three regional conferences on this theme sponsored by the International Paper Company Foundation, and, as mentioned above, it is currently trying to combine forces with IRE and NCCE to become even more effective in this effort. In New York City, the School Volunteer Program, directed by Mildred Jones, who is also President of the National School Volunteer Program, has been a leader in helping to form School/Community Connection, a local coalition promoting partnership, discussed in Section V.H. 8. below. Because of its broad network of local members in 47 states, Canada and England, it has great potential for spreading the partnership concept.

4. The Home and School Institute (HSI).

The Home and School Institute is much smaller than IRE, NCCE or NSVP, being almost a "one person band" conducted and played by its founder, Dr. Dorothy Rich. But that band has been playing partnership tunes almost exclusively for 18 years. Dr. Rich has insisted that "schools have a more limited role than we thought and I want to build a home-school-community partnership." She has pursued this goal by conducting workshops all over the country and by providing simple, hands-on, how-to-do-it publications for thousands of parents and community groups--all demonstrating that "there are all kinds of handles you can give a busy parent or baby sitter or grandparent--or even an older child--to use in building skills that have a payoff in achievement in school." The HSI's most notable publications include: Recipes for Learning, which describe on single sheets of paper simple, inexpensive things that can be done in the home to promote learning; Families Learning Together, which brings 48 recipes together in a single cohesive book; A Family Affair: Education, which among other things shows how schools can work with families; The Three R's Plus: Teaming Families and Schools for Student Achievement; 101 Activities for Building More Effective School-Community Involvement; and Bright Idea: Helps You Tackle Daily Life at Home.

Dr. Rich's extensive experience confirms other research in concluding that "parent participation is most widespread and sustained when parents view their participation as directly linked to their children's achievement." (See Section VI. B. below). She also believes "parents don't need college degrees to be good home teachers," or "fancy equipment or even a lot of time." The HSI's work has been well received wherever it has been used, but it is not used enough, since school systems concentrate their attention on professional service delivery. Perhaps we are coming to a time when more people will pay attention to HSI's work and its motto: "Fulfilling a child's potential is a family's achievement, a community's strength, a nation's security."

5. Information Project on Education (IPEN).

IPEN is an example of a state level organization which has been promoting partnership ideas. It is affiliated with IRE, and in its first years directed most of its attention to citizen participation in educational decision making and collective bargaining. In recent years, however, it has shifted more toward a partnership approach, under the leadership of its director, Jackie Berman, who said in 1980: "Public education will survive and prosper if its advocates will recognize that mutual support is a better approach than mutual destruction. It is time for the quiet revolution to be heard." It provides training, workshops and materials, and currently is focusing on relating partnership concepts to school imp-ovement and helping to maintain the fragile California Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, which has brought the major state education, parent and citizen groups together for monthly meetings (See V. H. 6. below).

6. Citizens Education Center Northwest (CECN).

CECN serves the state of Washington by "encouraging leadership in improving public education." Its most notable project related to partnership is Project ACCESS, implemented jointly with the Seattle School District to provide a "means for the community and its schools to unite in joint efforts to improve academic achievement." In carrying out its goals, Project ACCESS has: (a) conducted a survey of 1600 parents and many citizens and local businesses (finding strong support for citizen and parent involvement in education, but resistance from staff to involving them in decision-making); (b) published Help in a Handbook (on "the contributions made by individual citizens to improve quality in their children's or

their neighborhood's schools"); and (c) promoted school-level decision making by school site councils (believing that the role of the central school administration should shift "from making decisions that impact individual schools to finding ways to support and facilitate decisions made at the school site", "closest to the problems that must be solved and to the children whose needs must be met.")

While much of the announced purpose of Project ACCESS has been on involvement in decision making, much of the spirit of this involvement has been partnership: people working together to accomplish a common objective--greater achievement for children. The project has learned that a key need is to improve communication and overcome mutual suspicions so that partnership can take place.

7. Appalachia Education Laboratory.

AEL provides training, workshop and research services to communities in the Appalachia area. In 1968 it initiated the Home-Oriented Pre-School Education (HOPE) program which used TV, home visits and weekly group sessions to help parents in southern West Virginia educate their children in their early years. Follow-up studies showed greater school achievement, "less depression, improved personal organization, better school attendance and a reduced incidence of problem behavior. HOPE parents provide a more supportive learning environment at home, encourage their children to engage in academic pursuits and are more capable of fostering their children's sense of trust, autonomy, initiative, industry and identity." AEL became interested in what happened to the children once they entered school, and like many others, found that "the emotional distance between home and school seems to increase with the child's age." This is a necessary part of a child's growing autonomy, but one which can happen too soon, or in the wrong way, with devastating effects on the child's development. As a result, AEL has increasingly focused its work "on elementary school and childhood needs and on helping parents become involved in their children's learning. Projects undertaken since 1979 have dealt with relationships within families that affect school performance, and relationships between families and the school and community." A variety of studies and guides are available to aid home-school-community partnerships.

8. Parents As Reading Partners (PARP)--New York State Senate.

Although hardly an organization, New York State's Parents As Reading Partners Program (PARP) is included here to show that encouragement of educational partnership can come in many forms and from many different sources. In 1978, New York State Senator James H. Donovan called together 20 statewide education organizations to help find answers to the reading problem. The answer they came up with was a program borrowed from Idaho to encourage parents to read to their children at least 15 minutes each day. The program was based on the assumption "that children weren't reading because reading was seen, in their eyes, to be a chore, not something to enjoy." PARP assumes that if children see their parents reading to them, they will be more likely to enjoy reading themselves, read more, and thus improve their reading ability. Senator Donovan and his committee developed the concept into a statewide program. With little administrative superstructure, some materials sent out from the Senator's office, and the cooperation and support of local libraries, businesses, the Governor, the State Education Department, teacher unions, and local schools the program apread by 1981 to 800 schools and libraries across the state. Once it is initiated, PARP can generate local partnership activities. In P.S. 130 in the Bronx, the promotional letter was printed in both English and Spanish and accompanied by a "contract" and a system to tabulate the amount of time spent reading at home for an awards ceremony at the end of the year. Parents in the Glenmont School in Bethlehem, N.Y. got a bulletin saying: "development of a positive attitude in a student is something that cannot be developed solely in school. The home plays the major role . . ." The program not only improves students' enjoyment of reading (and therefore their reading ability), it also helps to generate a relationship between parents and their children that can carry over to other school subjects and family affairs. PARP has attracted so much attention that Senator Donovan's office now receives requests for information not only from New York State but from all over the country and foreign countries as well. With very little funding, using resources outside the usual educational service delivery system, PARP has generated significant educational activity and learning.

9. Local Support Organizations

There are many organizations at the local level which support parent and citizen involvement in education through workshops, newsletters, meetings, advocacy, and sometimes litigation. To cite but a few examples: The San Francisco Center for Public Education, for instance, has run training sessions and published a manual to help local school councils, provided a series of conferences on educational issues, published a regular newsletter, NEXUS, and networked with other agencies. The Public Education Association in New York, which started the School Volunteer Program which has now become national, has more recently promoted peer tutoring, and has joined with other organizations to form School/Community Connection to promote partnership for successful learning. The United Parents Associations in New York, in addition to its regular organizational work in supporting parent associations in over 400 schools, also promotes "Parents As Partners" and helps them become productively involved at the school, district and citywide levels. The New York Urban Coalition, which initiated the Local School Development Program to promote participatory planning at the school level, has contributed a key staff person to help facilitate School/Community Connection.

While national and statewide support organizations are necessary to spread the concept of partnership and support its development, the success of the strategy will ultimately depend on the help and support of thousands of local parent, citizen, business, and civic organizations throughout the country.

H. Networks and Coalitions

Networking is the wave of the future according to Megatrends. It will certainly be part of the future of educational partnership. There is no other way the concept can be formed, spread and acted on. Furthermore, for partnership, networking is not only a means, but an end, since part of the concept is the de-emphasis of hierarchy and the establishment of more "horizontal" relationships among educational partners.

"Networks emerge when people are trying to change society;" according to anthropologist Virginia Hine, "whenever people organize themselves to

change some aspect of society, a non-bureaucratic but very effective form of organizational structure seems to emerge." This seems to be the case with the networking that has formed around citizen participation and partnership in education. "The failure of hierarchies to solve society's problems forced people to talk to one another--and that was the beginning of networks," says Megatrends author John Naisbitt. "In a sense, we clustered together among the ruins of the tumbled-down pyramid to discuss what to do. We began talking to each other outside the hierarchical structure, although much of our previous communication had been channeled inside."

The "pyramids" of public education could hardly be said to have "tumbled down," but neither have they solved education's problems; nor are they likely to. Hence, concerned educators have"clustered together . . . to discuss what to do," and some have clustered around the ideas of participation and partnership.

Various kinds of networks have developed. Few have yet formed into organized coalitions to carry out a common agenda, and those few are still quite shaky. Yet, even in their nebulous form, they function as networks, enabling the participatants to exchange ideas, formulate plans, and reach out to yet other networks. Each of the intermediary organizations described in the previous section is involved extensively in networking. (Note NCCE's newspaper's name: Network). In addition to these, some other networks and coalitions include:

1. Partnership for Successful Schools (PSS)

The Partnership for Successful Schools began in the 1960's with a group of educators concerned that "our school systems were creating handicapping conditions," (my emphasis), not just failing to educate the handicapped. After intensive work in a number of schools, they discovered that the basic structure of most public schools stood in the way of productive education: "In school after school, they found that every staff had tremendous talent and motivation, all the expertise and dedication needed for solving major problems. What the staffs did not have was the means for pooling their great wealth of talent, experience, and desire. They were terribly isolated from one another and from the parents and other

community members who had a great deal of support to offer them." They also found that the "principalship has been made into a very lonely, demanding job" which "as schools are typically organized," cannot perform the key function of mobilizing the human resources in the school to work productively on the common agenda of educating children. They therefore brought together a small group of principals who agreed to work on "their own mutual growth and support as leaders who would focus on helping others to work together." They found that this produced almost immediate beneficial results in their schools--a changed climate in which "principals were invigorated, teachers responded with renewed enthusiasm, and the students responded," with increased learning and fewer "handicaps." This self-support system, called "Catalyst", caught the attention of other principals across the country, and soon a network of principals working in such groups developed. By sharing experiences, this network perfected the techniques not only for mutual support among parincipals, but for bringing students, parents, and community representatives into a process which was increasingly referred to as "partnership." From 1978 - 1981 the federal government funded a three-year demonstration project, using the Partnership's approach in a wide variety of schools across the country. The schools received no extra personnel or money except for data collection, analysis and reporting. By the end of the three-years, the demonstration students surpassed matched student groups by 50 percent in academic learning, and school morale and community support were greatly enhanced. During the demonstration, 29 states sent leading teachers, principals and state education department personnel to examine the Partnership approach through site visits and workshops, and out of these visits has grown a national network of educators committed to a new collaborative approach to education.

The Partnership for Successful Schools holds meetings and workshops in different parts of the country and sends out materials on the Partnership approach. An example of the results of the Partnership is four principal support groups currently operating out of the Tennessee State Education Department, which in turn are generating Partnership approaches in the local communities. Another example is the renewed program underway in Vallejo, California, where the superintendent, B. Phillip Bowman, is using the Partnership approach for a Partners in Education program with the motto:

"A Team to Promote The Learning of Students and the Adults Who Teach Them" (the adults being everyone who teaches them--parents, custodians, teachers, local employers, etc.). The interlocking of networks is also demonstrated here: Keith Beery, head of the Partnership for Successful Schools, introduced Helene Wardlaw, who is helping to run the Partnership program in Vallejo, to the California Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, and she now attends CCPIE's monthly meetings, to which she brings her experiences, and from which she draws support for her work in Vallejo. (See V. H. 6 below on NCPIE).

Recently, the Partnership has concluded from its further work that its successes have been attributable primarily to the development of mutual respect among students, parents, educators, and other citizens, and it is now developing materials directed more explicitly to this concept, e.g. "Placing Respect at the Top of Report Cards," "Respect is more action than feeling." The Partnership is looking for even better results than before in terms of increased student motivation, staff morale and community support.

What is the relationship between the "Partnership" of the PSS and partnership as defined in this paper? They would seem to be very close, despite their different origins. It is possible that the "respect" that the Partnership is now emphasizing is akin to "loyalty," as defined in Education Through Partnership, and that the techniques for developing mutual respect among educational participants are in effect creating non-bureaucratic relationships different from those called for by present school structures, with a kind of person-to-person accountability displacing hierarchical, legalistic accountability as the prime motivating force. The self-support groups for principals may be helping them redefine their professional identity and roles as leaders of partnerships, rather than "middle managers" of service delivery bureaucracies. These comparisons warrant further study--and networking!

2. University and Foundation Networks

Universities and foundations throughout the country have people who are involved with partnership-related concepts and provide invaluable network links. To cite but one example: Bank Street College has been

working with several family education programs supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation--Children with Teachers at Home in South Carolina, the Family Life Education Development Project at Ohio University, the Parenting and Learning Project in Alabama (mentioned in Section V. D. above), the Families and Schools Project of the Family Impact Seminar (discussed in paragraph 4 below), and several others. Not only has this process helped promote an exchange of ideas and experience among these projects, but the Bank Street personnel have been able to carry their experience into other networks. Susan Ginsberg, for instance, attended a meeting on educational partnership sponsored by the Foundation for Child Development, Teachers College and the New York City School System and was able to contribute her experience from Bank Street's Mott project. The university, foundation and school staff present were, in turn, able to link her experience with experiences gained thrcugh other networks in which they participated. The trick is to find ways to make the best use of this kind of immensely valuable resource of knowledge and experience represented in these interlocking networks.

3. Parent and Community Education Networks

Partly overlapping with university and foundation networks, but also involving experienced practitioners in state and local school systems, are the parent education and community education networks. Each of these represents an extensive field of knowledge and experience, much of which is related to educational partnership. Linking these networks with others interested in partnership can provide not only a richer source of insight and wisdom, but potential allies and staff resources for implementing partnership ideas. This is happening, for instance, in the state level partnership efforts in Utah and Alabama, where community education staff are taking the lead in facilitating the new partnership directions, in the involvement of New York State's community education staff with the statewide partnership coalition now in formation for "Breaking the Cycle of Failure," and in the National Community Education Association's joining NCPIE (see paragraph 6 below).

4. The Family Impact Seminar

The Family Impact Seminar is an example of a valuable networking

resource which ties educational partnership to other related areas outside education. Education is only one of the interests of the FIS. It was formed originally in 1976 to examine the impact of government policies on a whole range of family concerns--teen-age pregnancy, foster care, health, family services, parental employment, the changing family structure, etc. It has become involved with family-school relations primarily through its Families and Schools Project, which has examined the impact of federal, state and local policies on the relationships between schools, parents, teachers, students and communities (see Section VI. B. 3. below). As part of the National Center for Family Studies at Catholic University, it can bring to bear on these studies a whole range of experience and knowledge about other aspects of the family in its relationship to society. What is happening between families and schools must be seen as part of much larger shifts that are taking place in the structure of the family and society, and links such as the Family Impact Seminar can be invaluable in helping to maintain that perspective.

5. International Conference for Parent/Citizen Involvement in Schools

In July, 1982, a gathering was held in Salt Lake City of people interested in parent/citizen involvement not only from all over the USA but from other counties as well. It was soon found that although cultures and school systems differ, many of the same frustrations and ideas for dealing with them are developing in various countries. Participants hope to build and maintain an international network to exploit these common and yet different experiences. Although no definite plans have yet been formed for another international gathering, some of the participants are staying in touch and planning at least mini-meetings across national lines. Since many of the social, economic and political changes involved in the partnership movement are international, it is important to develop such a network. Much can be learned from the various ways in which different societies respond to these changes.

6. National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE)

NCPIE came into being in 1981, with a mission of "promoting parent/citizen participation in the public schools." Its formation was the

culmination of almost a year of coalition building under the leadership of the National School Volunteer Program (NSVP), IRE, NCCE and other organizations, and at the time of its formal announcement its membership included virtually all of the major national education organizations (school boards, PTA, the two major teacher unions, the administrator groups, IRE, NCCE, NSVP, etc.), plus other important national groups, such as the Urban League, the Children's Defense Fund, and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. Its stated goal is: "To improve children's education by promoting and advocating policies and practices that increase the involvement of parents and other citizens in the educational process as it occurs in our public schools, in the home, and in the community. Involvement encompasses all activities which allow parents and citizens to become partners in the educational process . . ."

NCPIE generated considerable interest when it was formed and it received funding from Union Carbide, Ford, and Bank America Foundation. It helped to generate statewide coalition activities in several states (e.g. Florida, California, South Carolina), some of which still persist. The national coalition, however, is languishing from lack of funds and lack of commitment from some of its members. An important issue is what is meant by "parent involvement." The definition agreed upon for the coalition's brochure includes "exchange of information, decision-sharing, services for schools, advocacy, and collaboration in the child's learning." This definition is broad enough to cover many different groups' agendas, but that may be the problem: Some groups are fearful that "decision-sharing" will include too much involvement in decision-making, and others that it will involve too little. The coalition was not able to agree upon a common position on parent involvement provisions in federal programs, nor has any other common action agenda gotten underway successfully. The National PTA has withdrawn from the coalition, and other groups seem uncertain about their commitment.

Coalitions tend to be successful when there is a clear, common purpose on which the member organizations can agree, even though they have other agendas outside the coalition which are unrelated, or even in conflict. "Community involvement" as defined by NCPIE does not seem to meet this

criterion. It is a common purpose only to the extent that it remains unclear. When it is clear, it is no longer common.

Partnership is a component of NCPIE's definition of involvement on which probably all members of the coalition could agree, and on which they could cooperate fruitfully at the federal, state, and local levels. The AFT, which is one of the members most fearful of how "decision-sharing" might be interpreted, said in its announcement in joining NCPIE, "Education is a shared responsibility," and it highlighted the NCPIE goal of promoting "policies and practices that increase the involvement of parents and other citizens in the educational process as it occurs in our public schools in the home and in the community." There is plenty for school and community groups to disagree and even fight about, but they could probably unite in promoting greater home-school-community partnership. Whether the members of NCPIE will want to do this, assuming they decide to continue the coalition, is another matter. The community-oriented members might be persuaded to if they see that partnership involves another kind of "decision-sharing"--not a substitute for participation in political and bureaucratic decisions where this is needed, but a different way of going about schooling which makes such decisions less important because people are working out productive ways of operating in cooperative relationships at the school, classroom, and teacher-parent-student levels.

Meanwhile, there may be lessons relevant to this question in developments at the state and local levels. The California Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, which was generated by NCPIE while it was still active, is still in existence and meets monthly with membership from major statewide education and community organizations. It seems to be kept alive by the leadership and support of IPEN (see paragraph 5 above) and by the financial crisis created by Proposition 13 and other threats to public education. So long as the various school and community members concentrate on common purposes, they seem to continue to have a reason to stay together in the coalition. A similar lesson is perhaps coming from the two coalitions in formation in New York State and New York City discussed below.

7. The "Rensselaerville," Group--New York State

In May, 1982, a statewide meeting was held in Rensselaerville, N.Y.

under the sponsorship of the Edwin Gould Foundation for Children. About 40 representatives of parent, teacher, community and child welfare organizations and the State Education Department met for two days to discuss whether they could work together to help "Break the Cycle of Failure", i.e. prevent school failure for the large number of children, mostly from poor and minority families, who, by becoming "failures" early in their school careers, become prime candidates for poor achievement, truancy, dropping out, unemployment and delinquency later on.

The response was positive, and the participants spent most of the two days thinking up new ways in which they could collaborate at the state and local levels in this common purpose. The concern about school failure was certainly not new; what was new was the determination to work together to reduce it, rather than blaming each other for it. The participants agreed to check back with their organizations, and when they met again in October of 1982, they decided to try to forge a coalition on this common agenda. A steering committee has been meeting since then to hammer out a common statement of purpose and an action agenda, and to raise funds for a small coordinating office to serve the coalition and provide information and assistance to local groups joining in its work. It remains to be seen whether they will succeed, but the signs so far seem positive. The major parent and teacher groups are still on board, and the State Education Department is incorporating its membership in the coalition into its new state plan for building school/community partnership.

The group has not defined its purpose as "involvement" as such. Its purpose is result-oriented--to "break the cycle of failure." The involvement comes in cooperating to achieve this common purpose. It has not seemed necessary, therefore, to define involvement; the emphasis has been on finding ways to collaborate. Assuming the coalition comes into existence, the main function of the statewide groups will be to encourage and assist their local counterparts (e.g. local PTA's, teacher unions, school boards, superintendents, etc.) to forge new collaborative relationships at the local level. At the state level, it is hoped that increased communication among education, child welfare, parent, school board, and teacher organizations will lead to modification and coordination of policy to facilitate

collaboration at the local level. The current chairman of the steering committee is a staff member of the New York State Council on Children and Families, one of whose responsibilities is to promote such coordination. He sees the coalition, including various non-governmental groups, as a way of achieving this elusive goal.

8. School/Community Connection--New York City

Some of the participants at the Rensselaerville meeting from New York City decided not to wait for the formation of the statewide coalition to get together. They started meeting in June of 1982, met all summer planning their first action program--a "Mentor Project" to recruit and train volunteer mentors to help students being held over in the 7th grade for the third year, and have continued to meet ever since. These groups to some extent represent an existing network of organizations such as the United Parents Associations, Advocates for Children and the Public Education Association, which have worked together in the past. But it also includes new organizations, such as the City Youth Board, United Neighborhood Houses, the Council of Churches and the NAACP.

The group, which calls itself School/Community Connection, has adopted the following statement of purpose: "To promote collaborative relationships among schools, families and all community resources to nurture positive learning environments in order to ensure the effective education of all children and youth." It has completed its first year of experience with the Mentor Project, has found many positive results from the cooperative effort (one visit to a single hospital produced 25 volunteers), and is now planning its program for its second year. The effort is still in its infancy, but it seems to provide a new and hopeful avenue for mobilizing school and community resources for the education of children.

VI. Research

Research on educational partnership has been limited, which is understandable since in the past partnership as such has not been a well defined or accepted category for research or policy analysis. There has, however, been research on related concepts, such as "parent participation," "citizen involvement," and "school-community relations," which can help us understand partnership. Research in more general areas is also helpful: analysis of child development, school climate, organizational theory, sociology of teaching, the history of education, all shed light on why present arrangements often fail to educate effectively, how they developed the way they did, why they have persisted in spite of their disabilities, and how partnership might help to revitalize education.

If one looks to research for "proof" of the merits of the partnership approach, it cannot be found. There are too many variables, and research cannot sort them all out definitively. Furthermore, there is an even more serious obstacle: partnership has rarely been tried, and usually on a piecemeal basis; no one can tell what would happen if it were taken seriously and implemented on a sustained basis over a period of time, with all the trial and error this would entail. On the other hand, there is no proof that present approaches are working very well either--and many indications that they aren't. One can only proceed, therefore, on available research and experience, with an awareness that shifting to educational partnership to a large extent represents travel in uncharted waters: successful progress calls for keeping a sharp eye out for shoals and hidden obstructions, and a willingness to change course from time to time to reach the desired destination. This paper can do no more than indicate some of the types of research that might be helpful, with a few examples.

A. Reviews of Research

There have been several useful reviews of research that bear on partnership. They are, of course, not research themselves, nor are they anywhere near as extensive as the reviews that have been done for reading research or class size. They do, nonetheless, represent efforts to

to learn what research is telling us in this area.

1. NCCE - Parent Participation--Student Achievement: The Evidence Grows.

In 1981, the National Committee for Citizens in Education published a review of 35 studies related to parent participation and concluded that the evidence is indeed growing that "parent involvement in almost any form improves student achievement," and that "parents are tremendous resources for public education, one that remains largely untapped." The review comments that it may seem "ridiculous" that such a commonsense conclusion has to be researched, but it suggests that the research is useful in countering the widely held belief that "once children are in school, their education is best left to teachers, that untrained parents unwittingly interfere with today's sophisticated teaching techniques, and that citizens who demand a voice in local education policy create needless conflict that disrupts the learning environment."

From the studies reviewed, the NCCE suggests that "a subtle but compelling argument for parent involvement can be made. When parents show a strong involvement in their children's schooling, they promote the development of attitudes that are key to achievement, attitudes that are more a product of how the family interacts than of its social class or income. If schools treat parents as powerless or unimportant, or if they discourage parents from taking an interest, they promote the development of attitudes in parents, and consequently their children, that inhibit achievement."

The publication provides a brief description of each of the 35 studies, all pointing "in the same direction": parent involvement works.

2. Oliver C. Moles, Systhesis of Recent Research on Parent Participation in Children's Education (Educational Leadership, November, 1982)

Moles reviewed a number of recent surveys and studies and found a strong interest in promoting productive partnerships, even among teachers and staff, but also "serious barriers" to their implementation (mostly stemming from school attitudes). He concluded that "educators need to re-examine prevailing beliefs about parents, their capabilities, and interests."

Two of the myths which Moles feels recent research tends to counter are that working mothers or parents with low educational levels are unlikely educational partners ("working mothers help as much with school work and other forms of participation with student learning as do non-employed mothers", and "parents' level of education has no connection with their ability to use at-home instructional techniques or with their willingness to help.")

As for techniques for implementing partnership, Moles sees certain lessons emerging: include teachers and parents in developing the program, build a sense of ownership, train staff and parents for their new roles, specify the roles carefully, and make sure school system is committed to the program.

3. Phi Delta Kappa, PAR Report on "Parent Involvement in Education"

Phi Delta Kappa's Center on Evaluation, Development and Research from time to time brings together panels of experts to review research and experience on a particular topic for its newsletter, Practical Applications of Research (PAR). The December, 1981 issue focused on parent involvement in education. The panel outlined the "several rather different meanings" of parent involvement: "the parent as an audience" for school activities, participation in governance, working in classroom as paid aide or volunteer, assisting in instruction, learning parenting skills, and helping one's own children at home. They reviewed the status of various key participants: (a) teachers, who they see as having very little training and quite conflicting views on parent participation ("difficult to initiate, burdensome to maintain, and ultimately destined to fade away" vs. "an immensely underused teaching resource."); (b) parents, who they see as often "uncomfortable when they come to school" but increasingly concerned and willing to help; and (c) children, whose attitudes have received little attention in research, but who seem to respond enthusiastically to well implemented parent involvement.

The panel suggested this key perspective: "families can educate their children as well as socialize them, and schools can socialize children as well as educate them. The dual roles of both institutions make it important for research to examine how the family and the school can work

together for maximum positive effects in student development." This means not just involving parents in the school, but "adapting curricula to families as well as schools," so that they can work together to educate children.

The panel also emphasized the importance of involving parents "and citizens." The National School Volunteer Program, for instance, has been dedicated to involving citizens as volunteers, thereby not only helping children, but symbolizing that education is a community enterprise.

B. Surveys of Opinions and Attitudes

There have been several efforts through survey and interview techniques to determine the attitudes of parents, teachers, and others toward participation and partnership in education. Surveys often reflect what people think their attitudes or behavior ought to be, or what they think researchers want, rather than their real attitudes or behavior. Parents may work with their children on homework less than they say they do, and teachers may say they favor parent involvement when actually they don't. Furthermore, responses may reflect how people feel under present circumstances, and reveal little how they might feel if their situation were changed. Parents might say they want participation, but actually find it burdensome if offered; or teachers might oppose participation because of past experiences, but find it agreeable if accomplished under different circumstances.

Nevertheless, even with these limitations in mind, the surveys done to date seem to support the idea of educational partnership. An NEA poll in 1981 found that over 90% of teachers favor more home-school interaction, and the annual Gallup polls that have been conducted on attitudes toward education since 1969 reached the following conclusion based on "a careful examination of survey findings" from 1969 to 1978:

> Many of the problems of the schools can be solved only if parents become much more involved than they presently are in the educational process. Parents must, in fact, be regarded as part of the teaching team. A joint and coordinated effort by parents and teachers is essential to deal more successfully with problems of discipline, motivation, and development of good work habits at home and in schools.

> Fortunately, in these surveys, parents have been found ready and willing to do their share. In the 1976 survey, for example, eight of every 10 persons questioned voiced their approval of courses for parents to help them assist their children in schools. ... For little added expense (which the public is willing to pay), the public schools can, by working with parents, meet educational standards impossible to reach without such cooperation.

In addition to these more general surveys, there have been a few studies focused more specifically on attitudes toward participation and partnership. All of these surveys not only provide useful data for researchers and policy-makers, but, by their publication, they provide a means of communication across group lines: teachers and parents, for instance, may find their attitudes more in agreement than they might expect from other communication (or non-communication) they experience.

1. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Study

The Southwest lab has conducted an extensive series of surveys of teacher educators, teachers, principals, and parents in order to provide "systematic data about the attitudes of key stakeholders toward the various aspects of parent involvement." The purpose of the studies was to "develop a data base which could serve as the framework for parent involvement training" and other efforts "to improve the success of parent involvement in the public schools." The results are of special interest for the partnership concept.

Based on data from thousands of respondents over a six state area, the study found much greater agreement among parents, teachers, and principals than many people might expect. There was strong agreement about the desirability of parent involvement in general, and about many of the kinds of involvement (such as parents monitoring homework, or finding out more from teachers about problems their children are having and how they can help). There was less agreement, and some disagreement, as to parent involvement in "decision-making," but again with more overlap than might have been expected (e.g. parents were less interested in participating in those decisions where staff were most opposed to their involvement, such as staff hiring and firing).

Parents assessed their own willingness and capacity to assume responsibility higher than they were rated by school staff. Parents, for instance, disagreed quite strongly with the statement that "parents are unwilling to spend time on their children's education," whereas teachers and principals were more neutral on this point. Parents agreed less than teachers and principals that "teachers must take the initiative to get parents involved in education," or that "parents do not have the necessary training to take part in making school decisions." Even so, the groups were not that far apart in their answers to these questions.

In general, the study concluded that there was far more agreement about the merits and methods of parent involvement than was reflected in the actual practices of schools, leaving the researchers with the question of "why parent involvement activities are not more common, particularly since the various stakeholder groups all seem to favor them." The surveys, as such, were not designed to answer this interesting and important question. In his analysis of the data, however, the survey's director, David Williams, lists some of the requirements for successful partnership, including: training for parents and school staff, a clearer definition of parent involvement, "a smoother transition of parents from roles of mere 'bystanders' in public education to those of active participants at all levels," a change in traditional perceptions of the roles of school staff and parents in children's education, and "changing school policies and structures to better accommodate increased parent involvement that is integral to the educational process." This list reflects a recognition that partnership requires substantial shifts in the practices of most school systems; merely favoring partnership, as the surveys indicate nearly all participants do, does not make it a reality.

2. Johns Hopkins - Becker-Epstein Study

Over the past three years, the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University has studied the parent involvement practices of 3,698 elementary school teachers in 16 Maryland school districts, with a subsidiary survey of their principals, in depth interviews of 40 teachers with high parent involvement and 40 control teachers with little or modest involvement, and surveys of 1200 parents and 600

students in these teachers' classes.

The dominant finding of these surveys and interviews is the great variety of teacher practices and attitudes about parent involvement. Some are enthusiastic about it; others are quite dubious, saying they or the parents don't have enough time for it, that parents are ill-equipped to help, that it is unfair to expect it since some parents will respond and others won't, etc. Over-all there was little involvement beyond traditional efforts to encourage parents to read to their children (seldom followed up on). Only 6% of the teachers visited three or more students during the year; 76% visited no students. Only 30% reported that they encourage home learning activities. "Systematic communication with--and motivation and training of-- whole classrooms of parents to increase the extent of parent involvement in learning activities at home is clearly not achieved by the majority of teachers. Most teachers say they believe that parent involvement in learning activities at home is important. Yet, because of the difficulties of accomplishing it in an educationally valuable way, most teachers do not make parent involvement at home a major focus of their teaching practice."

A strong impression from all the data is that partnership is for the most part left up to the individual teacher. Some like it and practice it and others don't like it and don't practice it. There is very little in the structure of the schools to support it--few rewards, and little encouragement (and some hostility) from principals. Furthermore, there is little support from the community: teachers feel if they are going to get any cooperation from parents (other than those who would help anyway), they have to do it on their own, often against stiff odds. They can't depend on a context favorable to partnership because there usually isn't one. How teachers might feel and behave if there <u>were</u> a context favorable to partnership--where both school policy and community context strongly favored, expected, and supported it--is only hinted at in this study. Three of the 16 districts in which the survey was conducted showed a stronger pattern of partnership activities, suggesting the possibility that these districts might be doing more than leaving it up to the predilections of individual teachers to encourage partnership. It

would be interesting to know what this "something" might be.

Another interesting phenomenon turning up in the data is that teachers who engage in some partnership activities seem to engage in and favor a variety of them. It is almost as if these teachers see a different role for themselves--a partnership role--and conduct their affairs accordingly, whereas the other teachers see their role more in service delivery terms and tend to discount most partnership techniques. The teachers who visited three or more students during the year, for instance, also had a higher percentage who worked on developing parent skills (51%); the teachers who paid no home visits had a much smaller percent (28%) who worked on developing parent skills. Some of the teachers overtly expressed their partnership philosophy in the surveys: "I really rely on parent help. Long ago I realized that only with parent help can my job be performed adequately." And, "It seems to me that education must be a partnership between parent and teacher." Others who practice partnership, however, may not preach it; it may just be their natural approach to teaching or something they have hit upon through trial and error, without particularly conceptualizing it.

Other important findings from the surveys include confirmation that teachers tend to use parent involvement techniques more in the lower grades, and that low socio-economic status of parents tends to be associated with negative teacher attitudes about parent involvement. Very significantly, however, those teachers who were positive about parent involvement and used involvement techniques were not limited by low socio-economic status of parents; they found parents from all groups could play partnership roles. Also the study found that having parents involved in school activities tended to correlate with teachers' use of parent involvement in home learning activities, again a sign that involvement tends to breed more involvement.

3. Family Impact Seminar - Families and Schools Project

The Family Impact Seminar has conducted an exploratory study in two states--Colorado and Connecticut--to identify practices that promote or inhibit home-school collaboration. From interviews with teachers, parents, and administrators from eighteen schools, the researchers found strong agreement on the need for, as well as the desire for, communication between home and school. Yet, as with the Southwest Lab survey, they

found much less actual partnership than most people seemed to want, even in schools where the principals said they wanted it (although these schools had relatively more than schools where the principals were not interested or hostile).

Data for the study are still being analyzed, but already several interesting indicators have come to light: As in the Southwest Lab study, parents seem more interested in helping with the education of their own children than in "decision-making" about school management. One researcher who had been involved in the interviews said, parents are "begging for a collaborative model." Yet many parents responded that they were not contacted by school personnel except for negative reasons and that they were hardly ever asked for their ideas in parent-teacher conferences. On the other hand, other parents said they were "adequately" informed and had "enough" contact with the school. This may be a case of the circumstances helping to determine the responses: "Adequately" and "enough" for what? Perhaps enough for service delivery, which is the system the parents are in, but not enough for partnership, which these parents might never have considered a possibility.

Another indication that parents were operating in a service delivery rather than a partnership context was that many parents "indicated that they do not know their role in completion of homework." While there is some variation among the schools in this study, the picture emerging from the data is that there is not much partnership because it is not called for by prevailing policy or school practice. One gets the sense from the research that people would be favorably disposed toward collaborative relationships if they were offered. Parents especially expressed these views, but teachers also, for instance, said they were willing to contact parents, even outside of school hours. In the Colorado study only one teacher said that union policies affected contacts with parents (although five principals said they "were a problem to family-school relations"). Both teachers and principals agreed they get little help from either pre-service or in-service training in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to work collaboratively with parents.

When the research is completed, the Family Impact Seminar plans to develop materials, such as guides and training materials, which can

be used to increase home-school collaboration. There is a wealth of material in the research data from which to construct not only useful materials, but further understanding of home-school partnership.

4. Implications of Surveys for Partnership

What are the prospects for educational change and improvement, as revealed by these surveys of parent and staff attitudes? They depend on the policy framework within which they are viewed. If looked at within the service-delivery-accountability framework, where the staff's role is to deliver educational services and the parents' and citizens' role is to hold them accountable, the picture can be seen as quite gloomy. The surveys confirm many parents' and citizens' experiences: staff can be expected to block the kind of participation in decision-making necessary for accountability. To overcome this staff resistance, parents and citizens either have to change staff attitudes or develop enough political force to overpower them. Neither of these holds much prospect of success, especially since the political role seems to be the one in which parents show less interest and against which staff shows the most resistance. Within the service delivery framework, the surveys hold out the prospect of a continuation of a dreary status quo, with whatever involvement there is being co-opted by school staff.

If looked at in terms of the partnership approach, however, the survey results look more encouraging. All groups seem highly favorable to partnership activities. It may be, of course, that positive staff responses are hypocritical, since the surveys confirm that schools engage in partnership much less than staff agreement would indicate. But there is a more positive way of explaining this: They don't engage in partnership because they haven't tried it; it has not been on their agenda. Their attention, and the public's attention, has been in another direction--namely, service delivery and accountability. From a partnership point of view the lesson of the surveys may be, "try it you'll like it."

It also might be asked how school staff, if they object to parent participation in accountability, could nevertheless favor the more fundamental shift from service delivery to partnership. The answer may be that what people oppose most is what they perceive to be against their

interests. So long as education is seen as something delegated to schools to deliver and be held accountable for, school staff will see accountability as against their interests; the worse the educational results (thus triggering more demands for accountability), the more staff can be expected to resist it. Staff might see partnership, on the other hand, as favorable to their interests. It redefines accountability by making education a shared responsibility, and it provides a way to help the staff get their job done. Furthermore, it is a different kind of accountability--more personal and less bureaucratic and political. Because partnership requires changes in attitudes and behavior, some resistance can be expected, but this kind of resistance can be overcome with orientation, training and strategy, whereas resistance based on perceived threats to vital interests can be overcome only by superior force and power. Some teachers and principals will resist partnership because it threatens their image of themselves as "professionals," and their monopoly of educational employment and functions, but, judging by the surveys, many teachers and principals do not have these concerns, and those who do might come to see that the advantages of partnership outweigh them, especially today, when demand for increased results are accompanied by reluctance to support increased professional input. The fact that partnership can be initiated gradually, with small, easy steps, to implement activities everyone says they favor, makes it likely that a successful strategy can be devised.

Lastly, the reaction of some parent and citizen leaders may be: "If the staff is for it, we're against it; it can't possibly be good for children." But this is only if education is seen as inherently adversarial, whereas it is more likely that this attitude is a product of present school-community alienation, which is in turn the product of the professional service delivery model of education. It makes more sense to take at face value what the surveys are telling us: parents <u>want</u> more responsibility, especially in the education of their own children. Parent and citizen leaders are right to be on their guard against co-optation, but they do a disservice to their constituents if they try to "protect" them against their own natural instincts to assume more responsibility in the education of their own and the community's children just because the staff might also favor it. The surveys demonstrate an area of genuine potential common

interest between parents, teachers, and citizens; the task of leadership in all sectors is to find ways to build on that common interest. The partnership approach provides such ways, whereas, if we are to believe the surveys, reform built primarily on accountability for service delivery has dubious prospects at best.

C. Program Evaluations

An important source of information about parent involvement comes from programs where it has been tried. Most of the favorable program evaluations are in the pre-school area, since that is where the more intensive parent involvement strategies have been tried. In general, "evidence from pre-kindergarten programs such as Head Start indicates that certain types of parent involvement can have positive effects on children." A typical finding from Head Start, for instance, was that children of parents who had a high level of participation retained their gains better than children of parents who did not have a high level of participation." A conclusion from another study of particular relevance for partnership was that the significant gains in I.Q. for the children whose parents were involved was attributed "to changes in the parents' perceptions of themselves as teachers of their own children."

From these favorable findings in early childhood programs, "a generalized 'halo effect' about parent involvement in all levels of the educational system has developed." Nevertheless evaluation of programs in higher grades seems to support the favorable impression.

In 1982 the U.S. Department of Education announced findings from an extensive study conducted by System Development Corporation "to determine the effects of parental involvement activities and the factors that influenced those effects" in four federal education programs: Title I of ESEA, the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII, ESEA), the Follow Through Program, and the Emergency School Aid Act - all programs operating beyond the pre-school level. It looked at parent involvement in five functional areas: project governance, instruction, non-instructional support, community-school relations, and parent education.

Not surprisingly, the study found a wide range of behavior, attitudes, and outcomes under the heading of "parent involvement." Furthermore,

in some cases parent involvement was little more than token; in others it "flourished." From its analysis of a large mass of data, the researchers reported conclusions of considerable relevance to the partnership concept: Positive outcomes, such as "improved student attitudes, conduct and attendance," "improved classroom performance," and increased parental "self-confidence," were found where parent involvement was seen as an "opportunity" rather than merely a requirement, and where parents were "treated as concerned partners in the education of the child," rather than as "passive receivers," who felt "that school personnel knew what they were doing and didn't want or need help from parents." Although neither the programs (with the possible exception of Follow Through), nor the research, were necessarily based on the partnership concept, the study tends to support the conclusion that programs run with a partnership approach were more successful than those run with a professional service delivery approach.

Seven "critical practices" were found in programs with effective parental involvement:

1. Provision of coordination for activities--to facilitate personal contacts, scheduling, etc.

2. Planning and needs assessment--to determine "the efforts that parents could realistically contribute before beginning activities," and to help staff understand how parent involvement would help achieve program objectives.

3. Clear specification and communication of parental roles--to make clear what was, and was not expected, and to avert misunderstandings.

4. Careful selection and assignment of parent participants--to match program needs with parent interests and capacities.

5. Training of parents and staff--to help both play their new roles effectively.

6. Two-way communication--to enhance problem solving and cross-fertilization of ideas and perspectives.

7. Recognition and publicity--to let parents know their involvement was important and attract new participation (and probably also to reinforce staff commitment to parent involvement).

Not included among the seven "critical practices," but seen as common to all of them, was "the willingness to monitor" parental involvement activities and to "react to changing needs and priorities."

Overall, the study found "no successful parental involvement programs when schools were not whole-heartedly committed to parental participation." Federal requirements, resources, and philosophy helped: Follow Through, "with its commitment to parental involvement as a central focus of the program," was more successful than the other three programs, in which "parental involvement was viewed as a minor part of the project" except where local authorities made it a priority.

D. Families As Educators

In recent years there has been an increasing, and encouraging, interest in the "family as educator." Although some scholars (and obviously many parents) have been interested in this subject for many years, educational policy and research has focused primarily on school factors. In the 1960's the focus began to shift: The Coleman and Jencks studies, with their implication that "home factors" were the important determinants of school success, and the Moynihan report, with its emphasis on the "tangle of pathology" of the Negro family, were examples of this new emphasis on the family. Some of this new interest was directed at much broader issues than education, such as the work of Mary Jo Bane, Christopher Lasch, the Carnegie Council on Children, and the National Academy of Sciences. Some schola however, such as Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, Eugene Litwak, and Hope Jansen Leichter, focused more specifically on the educational role of families and parents.

In addition to scholarly work, the increased interest also spawned institutional centers of focus on the topic, such as the Elbenwood Center for the Study of the Family as Educator at Teachers College (with Hope Leichter at its head), which has held a number of seminars on the topic and produced two volumes of papers: The Family as Educator, in 1974, and Families and Communities as Educators, in 1979; the National Institute of Education's Families as Educators Team (headed by Oliver Moles), which has sponsored a number of meetings and studies, including the work of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, discussed under "Surveys"

above; and the Family Impact Seminar (now headed by Theodora Coms), which sponsored the studies in Colorado and Connecticut, also discussed in the same section.

Most of the attention of families as educators scholarship has been on the early years, where parental influence is so obvious, and so obviously important; but, as Theodora Ooms has pointed out, families have a crucial role to play not only "in the early pre-school years, but also once the child is in school." Furthermore, as she also points out, "It is not sufficient to engage in close up detailed portraits of processes within schools and within families," as if they were "two parallel systems" quite separate from each other. She and others, therefore, have recommended more study of "the interactions between the family and school systems." Happily, interest in this focus is increasing.

One of the useful studies sponsored by NIE's Families as Educators unit is a study of "Barriers to Home-School Collaboration" in two junior high schools in Washington, D.C. by Sandra S. Tangri and M. Laurie Leitch of the Urban Institute. The schools selected had a high proportion of low income, minority, and single parent families, and in that sense were not necessarily representative of public schools generally. The comments of teachers and parents about parent involvement, however, seem typical of a great many inner city schools--and even many non-urban schools. The two schools were originally picked for their supposed contrast in high and low parent involvement, but the researchers found that neither school had much parent involvement. The reputation of high involvement in one school was apparently due to a very active PTA president who actually no longer had children in the school. One of the first lessons of the study, therefore, was that "parent involvement is a many-faceted phenomenon," and an active PTA, or PTA officer, is not necessarily an indication of the involvement of parents in general.

The 98 page report of the study consists to a large extent of quotations from interviews with parents and teachers and therefore provides an extraordinarily rich source of material about these key participants' feelings and perceptions. There is little data, however, about actual behavior, or analysis about the relationships between attitudes and behavior, or between institutional structure and attitudes. The overall impression one gets is utterly depressing so far as home-

school relationships--or for that matter, hopes for public education in general--are concerned. There is very little partnership between home and school; very little is being done about it, and very little people think can be done about it; whatever is tried usually doesn't work, or works for a short time and then dies out; the teachers and parents are depressed and discouraged; the children have serious behavioral and learning problems; yet, most parents and teachers are not complaining, and almost seem satisfied with the present situation.

So far as barriers to home-school collaboration are concerned, they seem overwhelming in their number and pervasiveness: working parents who have no time, non-working parents who have health problems or sick relatives to care for; teachers who don't care; teachers who do care but find their efforts useless; feelings of "us against them"; parents who "have thrown in the towel" and wouldn't respond to teachers even if approached; poorly educated parents who do not feel up to helping, or who are not seen as up to helping by teachers; parents who feel inferior to teachers; teachers who feel uncomfortable with parents; dangerous conditions that make parents unwilling to come to school; etc., etc. for page after page.

All of this provides a healthy dose of realism for those who want more productive home-school relations. Yet, it is crucial to understand that what is being reported in such dreadful detail is present reality. These are two schools which are not run on a partnership basis. They do not reflect the kind of home-school relationships there might be if the school were run on a partnership basis. Parents and teachers both testify that parents are almost never asked to help. Whatever communication there is is almost all negative--teachers reporting problems to parents, or parents reporting problems to teachers. These communications hardly ever produce the "second step, the plan for what to do next." Nor, for that matter, does it appear that either parents or teachers expect a second step. This may be because past experience has generated low expectations, but it is also because no one sees it as their responsibility to plan together or follow up. Nor are community resources turned to: "As nearly all the school staff agree, the creative use of resources outside the school has largely been ignored." "There is not an institutionalized

role in the school for the coordination and utilization of school resources, parent resources, and community resources. Since it is no one's responsibility and since everyone already feels pushed to the limit, this potentially important role does not get filled."

When looked at in this light, while many of the "barriers" to home-school collaboration are real enough, they may be more like fences put up between unfriendly neighbors, which can be taken down if relationships change, rather than like rivers or canyons which are beyond human control. Even seemingly uncontrollable factors such as working parents, may be more of a barrier in the minds of teachers (and some parents) than a real obstacle to cooperation. In one of the few areas where attitudes were matched against behavior, the study "does not show that employed parents (who have the least time presumably) are less involved than non-employed parents, but rather may be more involved." Nor does single-parent status seem to operate as an actual barrier--although again it is perceived as one. Furthermore, parents seem to want to help: "almost all the parents are able to think of something that they would like to do for the school," although they are almost never asked. And teachers generally agree on the importance of the home for successful learning, even though they see little they can do about it.

What emerges is that the most serious barrier to home-school collaboration is the institutional context of these schools--a context which does not call for collaboration, which defines roles in such a way that collaboration is not the expected behavior--a system in which a teacher can say, "It's frustrating to think that you teach all year and how little they learn." The teachers are doing their job: they are teaching; the fact that the students are not learning is just the way things are--in urban, minority America.

Why is it that most participants seem so satisfied--or at least not unduly dissatisfied--with this grossly unsatisfactory situation? The study sheds some interesting light on how "the system" works in this regard: Despite the unproductive relationships and conditions, the parents time and again in this study say how "nice" and "understanding," and even "helpful," the school staff is, even though clearly little effective help is actually provided. The teachers and administrators repeatedly say how sympathetic

they are to the parents--how downtrodden, helpless and hopeless they are--poor things. These are not schools where open hostilities are the norm--on the contrary "good feelings," and some might even say "good relationships," seem to prevail. But the good relationships have little to do with productive collaboration to produce learning or improved behavior; they almost seem to be an end in themselves: to make everyone feel good about the school. It is public relations, not partnership.

The professional structure of the schools also fosters this phenomenon: "Parents often go to counselors or other school administrators (principal, vice-principal) when a problem with their child arises. Teachers report that they are often unaware of these initial meetings, and their outcomes. . . . . When they are informed of the parent's contact with other staff, they may still not become directly involved with the parent or involved in a proposed solution." No evil intentions are implied here; indeed, the provision of non-teaching staff for the parents to talk to is no doubt justified as a way of providing more service to the parents. But, the chances are that the counselors and administrators are chosen at least in part on their "skills in meeting with parents," which, given the structure of relationships, results all too often in the parents being made to feel good, while their child's problem goes unresolved.

The Tangri-Leitch study is extraordinarily valuable for the wealth of interview material provided and the insights this gives into the non-partnership relationships which prevail in many, if not most, schools. The host of negative factors reported also provide useful guidance as to what can and cannot be realistically expected (e.g. working people cannot be expected to come to school during working hours--at least not unless employers change <u>their</u> behavior, which some employers elsewhere have done). It is especially useful for describing the special conditions that apply to junior high schools and the early adolescent age group. But it must not be taken as an indication of what can't be done, because it is clear that these two schools are far removed from anything like a partnership model. If anything, the study should serve as a spur to doing everything possible to get schools like these to shift to a partnership approach as soon as possible, before more harm is done to the children who attend them.

F. Other Research

1. Ethnographic studies.

Closely related to the "families as educators" perspective is the so-called "ethnographic" research of people like Urie Bronfenbrenner, and Moncrieff Cochran of Cornell, and Ray McDermott of Teachers College. Such research not only provides illuminating insights as to what is going on inside of classrooms and families; it also provides an important reminder that "relationships between parents and school staff are affected by factors which lie outside of individual parent-teacher dyads, i.e., in the structures of the school system, family, and the community," and in their institutional interactions.

McDermott's studies of the ways teachers and students communicate and miscommunicate with each other, and how these phenomena are caused by, and help to cause, other institutional, social, and academic relationships, is of utmost interest in understanding why educational partnership is so seldom achieved in urban schools, and how a conscious partnership approach might create much more productive relationships within the classroom.

2. Child Development

Child development has been one of the most prolific areas of educational research, and yet, again, little use has been made of it to help us understand the relationships between children's developmental stages and the institutional and cultural structures of schooling that make up such an important part of their lives. Without even doing new research, much could be learned from child development research as to how our institutional relationships take children who enter school eager to learn and turn them into passive and even rebellious non-learners. To cite but one tiny area, the work of Lawrence Dolan of the University of Rochester, and Margaret Spencer of Emery University, on the development of minority group self-concept, points out how Black children begin to develop negative racial self-concepts not in their pre-school years, as was previously supposed, but during their elementary school years, just when they are also beginning to learn that they are "incompetent" in school. They thus get a kind of "double whammy," which can explain much of their even more serious problems

when they get to junior high school. The moral and practical imperative of helping these children become productive, functioning partners in the learning process during the crucial elementary school years becomes very clear from this research, as does the harm done, even with good intentions, from our present passivity-producing service delivery approach.

3. Management and Economics

Most of the work on educational management and economics has focused, like so much other research, on educational services. The work on "production functions," for instance, deals primarily with the school factors that are presumed to have an effect on the delivery of services--personnel, equipment, curriculum teaching methods, etc. Very much neglected in these analyses has been the most important production functions of all--the students, and the factors that affect their motivation and productivity--their families, peer groups, communities, and culture. This is partly because these factors are hard to measure, but it is also because bureaucracies cannot "manage" these production functions; they are not under bureaucratic control. As a result, most thinking about educational management and productivity misses the mark. Changes in the relationships between teachers and their students can result in increased productivity far beyond what is likely to come from efforts to improve curriculum, personnel, and the other production variables, and yet these crucial partnership factors are not only often not researched, they are not even on the management agenda. Happily, this also is now beginning to change. Charles Benson's article on "Families as Educators: Time Use Contributions to School Achievement," is an example of an effort to look at the economics of partnership. The reports that Dorothy Rich's home-based Families as Educators program produced results at $21.00 per pupil which were the equivalent of school-based programs costing $565.00, are the kind of indicators which should whet the appetites of economists and policy-makers interested in producing more learning for available funds. Good economic research in this area could show cost-benefit advantages of partnership which would bring it into the mainstream of educational management thinking and planning.

4. Historical research

With many people feeling that public education has reached an historic

turning point, historical perspective is especially important. Why are we at a turning point? What is turning? What needs to turn? This can be understood in part by finding out how we got to where we are. The work of historians like David Tyack and Henry Perkinson is very useful here in explaining how we came to set up huge "educational service delivery" bureaucracies as our answer to our perceived needs. Even unbalanced historical work such as Blumenfeld's Is Public Education Necessary? is useful in helping to understand some of the paths that have led us into the unproductive by-ways of our present system.

5. Additional examples

The above are only a few examples of quite different kinds of research which can illuminate and be illuminated by the partnership approach. Other examples include: learning research (how to make more productive students as well as more productive teachers); school climate (how partnership can help create a productive climate); collaborative classrooms (the work at Johns Hopkins on team learning where student energies are directed toward helping fellow students learn as well as competing with them); international comparative education (how partnership is achieved in other cultures). Because partnership is not only a concept but an action and reform strategy, it helps to ask new questions for research and provides a framework for applying the answers to educational policy. It can thus help to bridge the gap between scholarship and policy that currently bedevils both worlds.

VII. Interventions

A. Summary of present status of partnership as a reform strategy.

At the moment we can say the following somewhat contradictory things about partnership as a reform strategy: It has tremendous potential for improving education for children throughout the country, yet few people, in or outside of school systems, recognize this potential. It has been successfully implemented for years in some classrooms and schools, and is being tried on an increasing basis in some school districts; yet it is at present only a small countercurrent to the mainstream of educational practice, policy and even reform. It might gain strength and perhaps become a major movement on its own accord without any special effort; yet it is unlikely to do so for several reasons:

1) It is subtle. It is right under our noses, and therefore hard to see. It is too simple and obvious, and therefore is not taken seriously as a possible solution to the complex problems besetting education, which are presumed to require extensive research and complicated remedies. It does not seem to be an "innovation," and, indeed, is not one except in being different from what most school systems are now doing.

2) It runs against mainstream thinking and practice. It does not run against insurmountable vested interests, but something almost as resistant: habits of thinking and habits of action--not only of educators, but of parents, students, school boards, and citizens. Partnership requires reorientation, which is always harder than one expects.

3) Partnership is not at the top of any group's agenda. Although everyone says they are for it, no one is responsible for implementing it.

4) There is no agreed-upon terminology or conceptual framework for partnership. In order to promote the idea, there has to be a way of talking about it that can crystalize people's thinking, get it on their agenda, and help them translate the concept into action.

Under these circumstances, partnership is likely to succeed as an educational reform strategy only if (1) its basic concepts are clarified

and shared more widely, and (2) one or more groups assume responsibility for promoting and implementing it.

B. Intervention at various levels

Educational partnership can be promoted at various levels, from individual classrooms and schools, through district, state, and national levels. It is already being promoted to some extent at the district and state levels (as discussed in section V above), but very little thus far is being done at the national level. The national level, however, may be the most important.

C. National partnership network

Local control of education in the United States is deceptive. Public education is in many ways a national system--with nationwide textbook distribution, national college admission tests, national networks of subject matter teachers, scholars and administrators, and, most important of all, national trends, reported through national media, that help define the agendas of thousands of local school systems. "National" does not necessarily mean "federal," although certain kinds of intervention by the federal government can reflect and/or enhance national trends. The progressive education movement swept the country (with varying degrees of dilution and distortion) without federal grants or regulations, and the same thing has been true, for both better and worse, of reading methods, organizational patterns, approaches to discipline, and many other factors that make public education far more uniform than one would expect from such a decentralized system.

Educational partnership must be implemented at the local (and even neighborhood) level, but it is not likely to be implemented to a significant degree except as part of a national movement. A state could undertake a campaign to promote educational partnership and have a widespread impact within the state, but this itself is more likely to happen if the idea has first gained momentum on a national basis.

Developing interest in partnership on a national basis is feasible,

because people are working on partnership-related ideas in various parts of the country, and some steps have already been taken to tie them together. IRE's work in linking people working on parent and citizen participation in school councils in Florida, South Carolina, and California, and the activities of the National Partnership for Successful Schools in promoting partnership in Tennessee, New Jersey, California, Utah, and elsewhere, are examples. The work that went into creating the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) might also provide a base for identifying and linking people and organizations which could promote the partnership concept.

A practical first step might be to bring together a small group of people from these and other organizations who are interested in the partnership concept to review its potential as a reform strategy and develop common terms and plans for action. This could be done directly by a foundation, or by an intermediary organization like IRE, IEL, or NCCE, with foundation help. This meeting should probably have no more than 10-20 people, with the invitees selected on the basis of their potential commitment to the partnership concept and their capacity for planning and helping to implement a strategy for promoting it. The agenda should be very focused: What is the partnership concept (i.e., is there a definable concept that can serve as a basis for action)? What is its potential as a reform strategy? How can that potential be realized? Within such an agenda various subsidiary questions should be discussed such as: What should the concept be called (common terminology would greatly facilitate its spread)? To what extent are existing coalitions or groupings sufficient organizational framework for its promotion, and to what extent are new networking or coalition activities needed? Would a National Commission on this topic be useful? If so, who could sponsor it? Who needs to be enlisted to make the effort successful? What are the next steps?

If such a meeting produced a group of key leaders committed to working on promoting the partnership concept, there is great prospect for success, since many other people across the country could be enlisted in the effort with the right leadership and sponsorship.

A second step might be to convene regional meetings in various parts of the country to test and shape the idea among a wider group of leaders. Such meetings could bring together people from the local area who are already working on partnership projects, people who are doing policy analysis or research related to it, and education, civic, and parent leaders who might be enlisted in an effort to promote it. Shaping the idea properly, devising effective strategies for promoting it, and enlisting key regional leadership are important elements of a national strategy, and such regional meetings could help to achieve all three.

Out of the original planning meeting and regional meetings could grow a national network of people working on educational partnership. Such a network could at a minimum stay in touch with each other, share ideas and experience, and provide the psychic support that comes from knowing that others are laboring in the same vineyard. It could also promote partnership through various organizations and coalitions.

If these particular steps prove unworkable, other steps should be devised to facilitate greater communication among the various people working on partnership-like ideas in different parts of the country.

D. State and local coalitions

With or without a national network, state and local coalitions can do a great deal to promote the partnership concept. Indeed, aside from the strong sponsorship of a superintendent, governor, mayor or other political figure, it is hard to see how it can be promoted without coalition activity, since its advocacy by any particular group tends to be viewed with suspicion by others, and, furthermore, it needs the support and cooperation of many different constituencies.

Coalitions are possible in this area because, while few organizations have it as a top priority, many are willing to make it part of their agenda. Nevertheless, coalitions in this area are likely to be quite fragile and easily distracted by other agendas, such as responses to budget cuts, efforts to hold the system "accountable," demands for political participation, and more traditional reform through improved

service delivery. Keeping the focus specifically on the partnership concept is therefore crucial.

E. Intermediary and support organizations

Organizations like the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE), The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE), The Institute for Eucational Leadership (IEL), the National Partnership for Successful Schools, and the Families As Educators unit at NIE are very important for the spread of a concept like partnership. These are national resource groups that are in touch with many other groups, both local and national. By calling meetings, providing information, talking with legislators and educational leaders, providing technical assistance, summarizing research, issuing publications, and joining with other organizations, these organizations help make people aware of new ideas and facilitate their discussion. They often have trouble getting funding because they don't "do" anything (e.g. they don't provide direct services to children), but for an issue like partnership, what they do is indispensible. If they didn't exist, similar mechanisms would have to be created to facilitate dissemination and discussion of the concept.

F. Materials, guidelines, video-tapes, etc.

Since educational partnership is a "new idea" for many people (i.e. they haven't been thinking about it as a way of addressing their problems), various kinds of materials would be useful in bringing it to people's attention, explaining its value, and showing how it can be implemented. This could include pamphlets, "how-to" manuals, video tapes, descriptions of successful programs, etc. The materials distributed by IRE, NPSS, IEL and NCCE have been very helpful to local groups around the country. What is needed is materials specifically focused on partnership, and a wider network of organizations and resource centers to distribute them and facilitate their use.

G. The media

Many people get their educational ideas from the media. This includes not only parents and citizens, but school board members,

administrators, legislators, and teachers. To some extent the media can be expected to pick up an idea once it gains enough momentum in school systems or the research community. An idea like partnership, however, may not be picked up as readily because it may seem like "nothing new," or like what parents and school systems have always done (or at least talked about). Special efforts with the media, therefore, to get them to see that this is indeed something new and important, would be a good investment.

A helpful step would be a special issue of one of the major educational journals focused on this concept. Phi Delta Kappan would be a good example because of its wide coverage and experience with special feature issues. If the Kappan is unwilling, Educational Leadership (which did a special issue on "Public School-Private Sector Teamwork" in November 1982), or one of the university journals might be tried.

Attention in newsletters such as EDUCATION USA, Education Week, or Education Times would also be helpful in creating a climate in which the public media might pick up on the idea.

It takes time, effort and money to do a good job on public information. Many advocacy groups lack skills and resources for this; they need encouragement and support for such efforts, especially for an issue like partnership.

H. Leadership activities

One of the functions of a national network would be to energize the leadership of various relevant organizations and constituencies. With or without such a national network, this should be done. Partnership should be discussed in the annual conventions and newsletters of groups like AASA, NASSP, National School Boards Association, PTA, and any educational, business, labor, civil rights, or civic groups that can be persuaded to take an interest--and also of their state and local counterparts. It will take leadership from many different directions to shift educational thinking away from unproductive service delivery to partnership, and leaders from many areas are capable of picking up the idea. But it first must be

spread, explained and talked about. Like work with the media, this takes time and money that is too seldom available, even though it is more likely to produce results than many things on which money is spent.

I. Advocacy

Because educational partnership is different from current dominant thinking, it will take advocacy of various kinds to bring the idea to people's attention. There is a problem, however: school systems and educational professional organizations tend to be committed to the service delivery approach, and many of the existing advocacy groups are preoccupied with "holding the school system accountable"--i.e. trying to reduce the number of illegal student suspensions, fighting for parent or citizen participation in the existing policy process, monitoring compliance with federal, state or court mandates, etc. Sometimes the whole reason for being of some advocacy groups comes to be seen as "fighting the system," and this makes advocacy for partnership difficult. Ironically, both the system and its antagonists become locked together in a wrestling match that absorbs their energies and makes it difficult to break in and suggest a different kind of engagement.

Nevertheless, some individuals and organizations feel strongly about the need to shift to a partnership approach to education (although they don't all use the same terminology), and they need support and encouragement for their advocacy efforts. The Institute for Responsive Education, for instance, has in the past few years started to emphasize the concept of "co-production" in its literature--that is, the co-production of learning by teachers, parents, and others. It is the same concept as partnership by a different name.

J. Action programs

The most direct implementation of partnership is through action programs initiated by school systems or community organizations. They might need support for orientation, training, materials, facilitation, coordination, etc., as well as for direct operating expenses of specific projects, such as volunteer programs, peer tutoring, etc. While all of

these expenditures are probably legally within the authority of a local school system, many systems will find most of their funds committed to professional service delivery, with little available to facilitate educational partnerships. They should be encouraged to reorient their budget priorities, but they may need "start-up" money to get the process going and demonstrate its value to the system. A danger to be avoided is rhetorical commitment to partnership, without any real understanding of what it means and the effort it will take to translate it into reality. Any grantee should also demonstrate the prior commitment of key partners in the program (i.e., if a school system is applying, it should show the commitment of parent and community groups; if a community organization is applying, it should show the commitment of the school system--or at least the individual schools with which it would be working).

K. Orientation and planning grants

With a change as subtle, and yet as fundamental, as educational partnerships, the hardest thing may be to take the first steps. A school superintendent, school board, or community group may think it has merit but not know enough about it to know whether, or how, to proceed. Or one key participant may be fully committed but not know whether others are ready. In these circumstances, a good investment might be a planning grant, to help key participants get together and decide whether they want to proceed, and, if so, how. This might include paying for week-end retreats, materials, and consultants. It might require several sessions, with follow-up and staff work done in between. It often takes some orienting before people understand the concept and how it can help them achieve their educational goals.

Once oriented, it takes some planning to figure out how to proceed--who will take what actions, how will key people be won over, what specific projects will be undertaken, what resources are available, what funds are needed from outside the regular budget, how much and from where? These questions can by answered only by people on the local scene who will carry out the program and they can often answer them only after considerable time and process. Since getting the effort off to the right start is

essential (after which it can often gain its own momentum), it is worth investing in this process. Since funders (and even the participants themselves) may think it a little frivolous to spend time and money on "orientation," the best label for such efforts is probably "planning grants," even though a good deal of what they accomplish is orientation.

L. Research and policy analysis

There is so much research, of so many different kinds, that can be done on home-school-community partnership, that a study of this scope can only touch on some of the types of intervention that might be helpful:

1. Analysis of existing research. Although there is not a great deal of research on educational partnership, what there is should be collected, analyzed, and summarized, so that it can be of most use to practitioners and other researchers.

2. Directory of researchers. In addition to summaries of research already done, there should be a directory of who is currently doing research on partnership and related topics. Perhaps the AERA could be of assistance here.

3. Symposium on research needed. Too little research is directed to what practitioners need to know, and too little of it is presented in a form useful to practitioners. A gathering of researchers and practitioners might help to clarify research needs and how they could best be met, with the results shared with researchers and potential researchers around the country.

4. Evaluation of partnership programs. The process of initiating partnership approaches in school systems is too seldom documented and analyzed. What works and doesn't work? What obstacles are encountered and how are they overcome? What attitudinal changes take place, and what is the effect on relationships and the education of children?

5. Analysis of partnership as a reform. While research cannot prove the merits of partnership as a reform strategy, it could shed light on it. Various assumptions of its advantages in this position paper, for instance, should be treated for research purposes as hypotheses to

be tested, even while action proceeds to implement reforms that seem practical and desirable on the basis of available analysis and experience.

6. Analysis of present policies and practices. Existing research indicates some of the disabling aspects of the present policy framework--the rigidities of bureaucracy, the alienating effects of current student-teacher-parent-community relationships, the passivity of instruction, etc. More work is needed to understand the seriousness of these disabilities and how much they are due to poor implementation as opposed to inherent defects in the structure of relationships.

7. Surveys. More work could be done to find out how people feel about the present system and how they might react to a shift to partnership. One must be careful with surveys, however. If a survey asks parents or citizens whether they "want" to participate more in education, negative replies may reflect conditioning by the present service delivery approach, rather than an indication that people do not want partnership, which they may never have experienced or even thought about. Carefully constructed surveys, however, might be able to shed light on how people currently define their roles, responsibilities and expectations, and how they might respond to various changes.

8. Research in other fields. In addition to research directly on partnership, important lessons may also be derived from research in other fields such as child development (e.g. regarding children's needs for various kinds of relationships at various periods of their lives), learning theory (e.g. the relationship of passive student behavior to students' roles in various organizational structures), political theory (e.g. the effects of "self-help" on political participation in other fields beside education); and political philosophy (e.g. changing definitions of freedom and responsibility). Since the issues now facing public education are of such fundamental importance to the social and political structure of American society, it is imperative to increase communication between scholars and policy analysts in education and other fields. Communication about the concept of partnership in education can be particularly fruitful in this regard.

9. Clearinghouse. The information from present and future research should be collected and made available through one or more clearinghouses, using either those already in existence or creating new ones. Although a great many simple partnership activities can be initiated without worrying about research, more extensive efforts to shift the basic approach of a school system from service delivery to partnership are likely to be complicated and difficult, and practitioners should have available in useable form whatever assistance research has to offer.

VIII. Conclusion

Education through partnership is not yet a movement; it is a movement waiting to be born. It might become one without any help, but it is more likely to require midwifing. There is much that can be done to help it at all levels--district, state, and national. Well chosen assistance to develop and promote educational partnership is likely to have high payoff in improving education for America's children.